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The Week

THE resignation of Mr. Bonar Law, reports of a new German offer, a fresh statement by M. Poincaré, and threats of renewed hostilities between Greece and Turkey were the outstanding events in the European news of the past week. For once, the diplomatic excuse of "ill-health" as justification for a resignation is taken at its face value. No pressure was on the British Prime Minister to resign save that resulting from his own physical disabilities, which compel him to relinquish the reins at a particularly unfortunate moment in view of the important developments which may be expected in the reparations problem. The Cuno government, badly shaken by the prompt French rejection of its offer and the vigorous rebuke by Lord Curzon, is reported to be preparing a new proposal in which German industrial resources will be pledged to guarantee annual payments. Perhaps in anticipation of such an offer, M. Poincaré reaffirms his country's intention to remain in the Ruhr until passive resistance ends and payment is guaranteed. Meanwhile the Lausanne Conference is marking time. The reports of Greek belligerency may be genuine but are more likely to be intended as a supplement of the government's effort to get the easiest possible peace terms from Turkey. Mussolini offers his weekly touch of comedy by promising partial suffrage in local elections to some Italian women, being moved thereto, it appears, by the sight of the assembled delegates to the international suffrage convention at Rome.

POLITICS, prohibition and an unfavorable balance in export trade were the outstanding features of a dull week in domestic affairs. President Harding has decided after all to include the World Court in the list of topics to be discussed during his transcontinental tour, aided in his resolution, perhaps, by the continuing series of endorsements for the project from various public bodies of whom the New York Union League Club and the General Assembly of the Presbyterians are the most recent. The latter body is also responsible for the most cheerful news of the week, the rejection of William Jennings Bryan for Moderator. In domestic politics an interesting fight impends in Minnesota where Governor Preus, instead of nominating himself for the vacant seat in the Senate, must run against a Farmer-Labor candidate, thereby making a Democratic victory not impossible. In New York the quarrel between Governor "Al" Smith and Hearst has broken out afresh at the moment when the New York World makes the proposal that the Democratic convention of 1924 should be brought to the metropolis. The Socialist party, in session in the same city, has been hearing various explanations of the reduction in its ranks from 118,000 to 12,000 in the past four years. The gloomiest news of the week comes from the White House, where it is authoritatively stated that Mr. Harvey will *not* resign.

BONAR LAW'S resignation introduces new elements of danger into the European international tangle. His policy was not distinguished for strength, but it represented, nevertheless, an honest striving toward peace and reconciliation. His probable successor, Lord Curzon, is a man of quite different temper and traditions. He is an exponent

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of force, and the ablest champion of the imperialists. His notes to Germany and Russia have already given the world a foretaste of the policy he is likely to pursue. The interests of the British in the Indian Ocean and the Near East are thrust toward the centre of the stage; British interest in European reconstruction takes second place. In the East the possible enemy is Russia, and Curzon would be relieved if Russia were weakened by counter-revolution or by a Polish attack supported by France. No doubt Curzon would be willing to give France a free hand in Western Europe in return for unqualified support of England in dealing with the Russians and the Turks. It is true that he is not likely to last long if he develops a policy of adventure too openly. But he may last long enough to involve Europe in disorders that a saner successor will be impotent to quell.

THERE is abundant evidence that the movement for armed intervention in Russia is gaining strength both in the border states and in Western Europe. The religious prosecutions have given the movement a much desired moral basis, but the movement was on before the prosecutions were carried through. The Poles have never abandoned their dream of a greater Poland extending to the Black Sea, nor have the French abandoned their dream of a powerful imperial Poland to aid them in keeping Germany permanently in bondage. Like the interventionist movement immediately after the revolution, the present movement grossly underrates the real strength of the Soviet government. The importance of the disability of Lenin and of alleged dissensions among the other leaders is given an exaggerated weight, as is also the unrest of the peasants and the general discontent with the economic situation. But it is virtually certain that the first move toward intervention will draw practically all Russians into a compact mass behind the Soviet leaders. The Russian army may not be so well equipped as Western forces. But throughout their history Russian armies have been underequipped, but have given a good account of themselves, nevertheless.

POINCARÉ'S demonstration that the Ruhr invasion isn't costing much is specious. True, the French troops have to be supported somewhere, and it costs very little more to support them on German soil than on French. The statement ignores the losses involved in the disappearance of reparation coal and coke, and other products in kind. It also ignores the fact that if matters were to go on in this way, France might as well write reparations off her ledger. The Ruhr invasion has proved to both the Germans and the French that the sheriff's seizure method does not work. So far as the financial side of the question is concerned, the French have thrown their big trump and captured nothing but a worthless three spot. And so far as security for France is concerned, Poincaré himself now admits that France does not need to hold the Ruhr. Occupation of the left bank of the Rhine, he says, is sufficient. But he has not secured the right permanently to occupy the left bank, and the Ruhr invasion is not bringing him visibly nearer to that object of his policy.

TURKEY'S demand for an indemnity from Greece is put forward, we assume, merely for trading purposes. Greece is in no position, financially, to pay an indemnity. If she were solvent, she would nevertheless not pay, unless Turkey were able to invade her territory and treat her as the French treat the Germans. But the Western powers would never permit the Turks to do that. As for the moral grounds of the Turkish claim, they might be valid, if the behavior of the Greek troops in their retreat in Anatolia could be taken as an isolated event. But the policy of the Turks in expelling hundreds of thousands of Greeks from their homes in Asia Minor, thus throwing the burden of their support on Greece, forecloses any moral claim the Turks might otherwise have. Neither Turkey nor Greece can come to court with clean hands. They had better let bygones be bygones and try somehow to reconstitute their relations on a basis of give and take.

THE replies of several hundred editors of newspapers in small cities and towns who were recently canvassed by the Institute of American Business as to their views on the League of Nations appear to furnish support for the depressing theory that most journalists take their political opinions ready made from the leaders of the parties. Of Democratic editors 78 favored the League, and 18 were against it; among Republicans, 14 were in favor of entering the League "as is," 33 wished to enter with reservations, and 156 would have nothing to do with the proposal in any form. Of the daily newspaper editors who label themselves "independent," 93 were in favor of the League and 42 against it, while the editors of weeklies of the same type voted against the League 54 to 24. Such tabulations are always interesting; but no one can say that they represent the views of the country as a whole, or even the editors themselves. Much depends on the form in which the questions are put, the auspices under which the inquiry is conducted, and the general state of affairs both abroad and at home at the moment the reply is sent in. The utmost that any careful historian of current events may say on this subject is that in 1920 the people were bewildered, frightened and resentful of the hardships imposed on them during the war; and that in 1923 they are angry at hard times, bewildered and probably a little frightened still.

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THE whispering campaign which was in progress a few months ago against Detroit's municipal operation of her street railways seems amply belied by the facts. The first year's operation saw all current expenses met, $4,000,000 set aside for a sinking fund, $1,200,000 paid on the purchase price, and a million dollar profit earned despite the fact that in only two cities in the United States are higher wages received by platform men. As is usual in such seeming miracles as this, one man is responsible. Mayor (now Senator) Couzens is a millionaire business man who happens to have a passion for government ownership. The traction interests of Detroit who foolishly tried to fight him were steam-rollered for their pains, and Couzens, until he went to the Senate, devoted energies with a market value of $75,000 or $100,000 a year to a job for which $8,000 or $10,000 would usually be considered a munificent reward. The lesson of Detroit, if it has one, is that municipal ownership will succeed only if it is able to attract or develop for its service the sort of abilities he has displayed. Financially, there is no reason why a city should not be able to pay as high a price as private industry for executive brains; and in spiritual satisfactions it can outbid the corporations ten times over.

MR. WILL ROGERS, who is paid a handsome honorarium every week for his knowledge of what the people want, gave some advice to President Harding the other day as to topics the latter might discuss on his transcontinental tour. The people are not interested in "the international court or the League of Nations and all that junk," according to Will. "They want to know, is Valentino going to be allowed to make pictures? Can Willard whip this Firpo? Where are we going to find room to park our cars? How about another orange in these orangeade stands?" Vice-President Marshall expressed somewhat the same point of view when he made his famous remark "What the country really needs is a good five cent cigar." There is no doubt that if he took Mr. Rogers's advice the President's tour would be ever so much more exciting to the populace; but there is no danger that he, or any other personage in public life, will get down to cases in this way. When a politician talks about the tariff as an aid to industry, or how to preserve the spirit of the founding fathers, it is impossible for the average citizen to judge the soundness of his theories; but if he should try to tell his fellow countrymen how to find parking space, or what to do about the paucity of oranges in orangeade, it would be apparent at once and to everyone whether he had any sense. In too many cases that discovery would be fatal.

THOSE of us who recall the popular economic theories of twenty years ago feel somewhat confounded by the current discussion of the appearance of an "unfavorable balance of trade." Not only Mr. Hoover, but the bankers and leaders of commerce and industry seem to rejoice that we are now buying more than we are selling. No doubt there are persons still to be found in remote villages who wag their gray beards and groan over the American dollars that will go into foreigners' pockets instead of remaining at home to make work and good times. But they represent an anachronistic minority. Strangely enough, the people who are worrying about our trade balance are the English. They are afraid that if this goes on long enough, the pound sterling will go above par and we shall begin to dump our superfluous gold on England. A respectable authority even proposes to place a ban on the import of gold. Whatever may be the case in physics, in politics all things are plainly in flux.

THE opening of the Federation Bank in New York is another step in the novel and promising development of trade union banking. There are old-fashioned exponents of the class struggle theory who regard the rise of labor banking with misgivings, as tending to confuse class lines. But the hard and fast class line, with property owners all on one side and workers on the other, has never been a reality in America. Nor is there any strong reason for believing that it is to become a reality. We shall probably have to solve our social problems without a pure proletariat. And in the real struggle, between those who depend chiefly for their livelihood on their labor and those who depend chiefly on their capital, it is extremely important that the property of the former class should be employed as effectively as possible. The labor bank increases the productiveness of labor's savings, and helps to break down the favoritism toward capital that ordinary banks too often display. We trust that the Federation Bank will succeed brilliantly.

THE reply of the directors of the Standard Oil Company to the charges made in the La Follette report lacks nothing in the way of directness. It declares that the edict of dissolution has been lived up to in absolute good faith and that competition among the several Standard Oil companies is a reality. It denies that the few largest stockholders can compel unity of action through their common interests. The Standard Oil of New Jersey, for example, is run by its directors, who hold proxies enough to perpetuate their control, and could get other proxies to continue it if the Rockefeller interest turned against them. The inference is that the stockholders in Standard Oil, as in most of our railway corporations, are strictly absentees. In reply to the charge of excessive profits, the company declares that the profit on gasoline is less than a cent a gallon over costs—how determined, we are not informed. As for

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the large earnings on capital, the company substitutes assets for stock and shows that on its valuation of assets the earnings are modest. The controversy appears to turn largely on differences in the meaning of terms. The reply will not shake the popular opinion that those who bought Standard Oil twenty-five years ago and kept their holdings are among the most lucky of investors.

THE NEW YORK DRAMA LEAGUE deserves the country's hearty thanks for being inspired recently to conduct a tournament for little theatres, in which twenty of these organizations of amateurs presented one-act plays in competition for a loving-cup presented by David Belasco. Those who have a well grounded belief that most amateur productions are perfectly terrible things to sit through would have been pleasantly surprised at some of the directing, acting and scenic effects. The pain to the audience, or lack of it, is however, the least important fact about the little theatre movement. In these community efforts, now so numerous in all parts of the country, aspirants for the stage can learn, if not how to act at least how not to act; playwrights are both encouraged to produce and discouraged by discovering how dreadful their product is; and the youth with a leaning toward stage design can astonish and delight himself by the miracles he accomplishes with a gray burlap panel and a disk of orange cardboard. The Producing Managers' Association recently spent many thousands of its own and other people's dollars in a disastrous attempt to establish a National Theatre which was to be superimposed on the theatregoer, willy nilly, by sheer weight of money. A tenth of this sum given to aid Messrs. Hartwig and Tucker in their effort to improvise dramatic art at every crossroads would have done a vast deal more good.

THE AUTHORS' LEAGUE OF AMERICA is the latest victim of the mania for uplift. It has called an "International Congress on Motion Picture Arts" which will meet in New York in June and to which it has solemnly invited Kipling, Galsworthy, Wells, Hardy, Anatole France and everyone else you ever heard of. Such a congress will do nobody any particular harm; but the chances that it will result in better films are about as good as would be those of international conferences on behalf of better painting or novel-writing or piccolo-playing. A three-fold censorship interferes with the artistic quality of motion pictures today: first, that of the men actively engaged in production, whose native intelligence, education and culture are with few exceptions lower than is the case among men in comparable artistic occupations; second, that of the group which controls the whole industry under virtually monopolistic circumstances; and third, that of the thousands of exhibitors whose antecedents are often (though of course not always) those of the fly-by-night "show business." Even beyond these there is often a formal state or municipal censorship conducted on just the intellectual level appropriate to the sort of person who is willing to accept such an appointment. This is the sort of censorship which insists that Armand be married to La Dame aux Camélias and that Kipling's Ameera be dowered with most explicit Benefit of Clergy. If this quadruple conspiracy against genuine art should ever be overcome by some miracle—which the Authors' League can hardly aid—the betterment of the screen would still remain the problem of the individual creative artist working, in travail of soul, to produce the best there is in him. An International Conference is as much help to him as a brass band would have been to Joseph Conrad in writing Nostromo.

Pussyfooting Politics

PRESIDENT HARDING could hardly have better illustrated his dominant personal characteristics than in his speech last week on Alexander Hamilton. His theme was blocs and the harm they do, and he deplored the existence of various unnamed trouble-making groups and factions. He referred, of course, to those groups, in and out of Congress, which oppose his own views; the "best minds" are a bloc, powerful and partisan, but they are on his side and therefore innocuous. It is entirely in accord with his character that he should shrink from and deplore the sort of vigorous opposition which Roosevelt, under his incessant compulsion toward robustness, would have welcomed as lending added zest to the fray. Mr. Harding regards such opposition, when it becomes sufficiently organized to be serious, much as a careful Dutch housewife would a muddy-footed dog racing over her spotless kitchen floor. The blocs upset things, for the President; they prevent a smooth, comfortable administration; they bring storms, when his penchant is all for sunny skies.

It should be said in fairness that in thus pouring reproaches on those who are troubling the waters of conservatism, the President expressed not only the view of his own party's leaders but the Democratic bosses as well. Not for many years has there been such universal adherence on both sides to the general policies which are indissolubly linked with the names of the oyster, the possum, the chameleon and the squid. The Republicans have no foreign policy except the International Court, in supporting which even the President is more brave than his advisers; and on domestic issues they show an equal desire to avoid hurting anybody's feelings by taking a stand. They have no attitude on the railroad question. Their ideas on labor consist of Mr. Daugherty and his injunctions; on immigration they seem likely to yield to whichever group shouts loudest; on prohibition they will of course straddle as usual. The

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farmers are able to bulldoze the administration into giving them representation on the Federal Reserve Board, but the bankers are able to prevent the movement toward that inflation which the agricultural districts desire. All in all, Republican achievements in the last two years are convincing proof that their campaign slogan of 1920, "Let's have done with wiggle and wobble," represents an aspiration lamentably unfulfilled.

While the Republicans are thus characterized by timidity, it must be admitted that the Democrats are hardly in a position to point with scorn to the mote in their rival's eye. Their leaders would give their souls to be freed from the necessity for standing behind the League of Nations; and if they can they will undoubtedly frame their support in such equivocal terms that it will mean even less (if possible) than it did when Mr. Harding plumped for an Association of Nations in 1920. The Democratic bosses are in terror of Mr. McAdoo's known sympathy for government operation, if not government ownership, of railroads. On prohibition their plight is as deplorable as it was two years ago; and they will only be firm in their denunciation of the tariff if hard times obligingly return before the election—though they also hope, by diligent injections of adrenalin, to keep the sugar scandal alive until then. Their ambition, in short, is that of the Republicans: to pussyfoot and to keep on pussyfooting, until after election.

This joint ambition of politicians in both parties is the more interesting—we refrain from saying "surprising," since to the faithful observer no act of the professional politician can cause surprise—in view of the present temper of the country as a whole. The common testimony of all who have travelled widely over the United States in the past few months is that the people are violently discontented with things as they are. Certainly the election last November gave no augury of success for a policy of inaction. It is true that farmer discontent is based on economic misfortune, and will no doubt dwindle if good times continue. It is also true that if, by a miracle, rising wages should keep in advance of rising prices, the grievance of labor would be somewhat alleviated. Yet it is impossible to believe that the popular demand for drastic remedies and a bold front should have disappeared entirely by the time the next campaign is upon us. If the peak of prosperity has been passed before the national conventions have been held, discontent is certain to be not less but greater than at present.

Despite all this, under any calculation of the alignment of forces now possible, it seems out of the question that a third party should win in 1924. The South as usual will vote the Democratic ticket whatever happens; and the customary large sections of the East may be relied upon to go Republican though the heavens may fall. Organized labor seems no more likely to repudiate Mr. Gompers in this election than in any other. There is no basis for the expectation that progressive Republicans and Democrats will desert their parties in sufficiently large numbers to give a plurality to a third party.

America is so thoroughly addicted to efficiency, to abhorrence of "waste motion," that this situation seems to many people quite ample excuse for tacitly conniving in a conservatism which they individually deplore. The progressive Republican Senators, for example, are reconciling themselves, though with evident pain, to a renomination of Mr. Harding; and most of them will do what they can to re-elect him and secure the continuance of a group of policies to which they are bitterly opposed. The progressive Democrats are in a better situation only because they are the party of the Outs; if their national convention should be captured by the pussyfooters for such a candidate as Underwood, for instance, there is every reason to believe that, like the Republicans, they will pocket their pride and stand by the machine in the hope of sharing the pleasant perquisites of success.

It is a nice question how far the idealist should ever compromise with reality for the sake of getting half a loaf; probably most sensible men would agree that it is foolish to stand by your principles so completely as never to move an inch forward. In American political life, however, the choice presented makes more searching demands. Men like Borah and La Follette find themselves nominally in support of a party with which they disagree on virtually every fundamental domestic policy; and with no hope of ever converting their "comrades" to their own point of view. If they, and others of their opinion, are unwilling to make the break now, when the whole West is in revolt against the pussyfooters and their policies, when is a better opportunity to be expected, and what can its terms be?

More Records Smashed

ONE day recently the Secretary of the Navy left his office, marched across the baseball park in Washington, and pinned a medal on the chest of Everett Scott, shortstop of the Yankees. "Elaborate ceremonies marked the presentation," says the New York Times:

> As game time approached the players of both clubs [Washington and New York] lined up across the diamond facing a lane extending from the pitcher's box to the plate. A signal from President Clark Griffith of the Washington Club, and the Marine Band, which had been entertaining the 7,000 spectators for the past half hour, marched upon the field preceded by Scott, in uniform, and President Ban Johnson of the American League.
>
> The parade swung across the field and came to a halt

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at the pitcher's box, Scott and Ban Johnson advancing to the plate where they met and were introduced to Secretary Denby, who made the presentation after complimenting Scott on the spirit of loyalty and the powers of endurance which had enabled him to establish so remarkable a record.

Shortstops might seem to belong more properly to Secretaries of the Interior than to Secretaries of the Navy. But what led Mr. Denby to the plate this afternoon in May was a record run of consecutive performances on the part of Mr. Scott. Since the twentieth of June 1916, Scott has not missed a game played by his ball team. He has come through torrid weather and influenza epidemics, to say nothing of the spiking, sliding, throwing accidents to which a player is exposed; more remarkable than all the rest, he has come through six seasons without challenging the judgment of an umpire belligerently enough to be punished by suspension. He has almost doubled the previous record for consecutive performances. And he has pushed his total to a thousand.

Six years without a slip-up, in any field, is a notable achievement. The sport pages dust off the superlative they use on these occasions, and hail Scott as a "miracle man." Secretary Denby marches with the Marine Band. We add our own congratulations. We can't help wondering, however, what would have happened if Scott had had a toothache on the twenty-third of April 1920. Suppose he had missed the game that day? He had played in 533 consecutive contests, to that date. He has played in 466 more, subsequently. Had he missed one game in a string of a thousand, his usefulness to his team would have been decreased by one-tenth of one percent. He would still have had an admirable record. But would the Marine Band and a Cabinet major domo have escorted him from the home plate to the pitcher's box and back again? No. Why should they? He wouldn't have "broken the record."

Breaking records is the fancy of the moment. Mr. Scott is not the only commoner to rise to fame. We have just had the long distance dancers. "Marathons" were proceeding simultaneously in a dozen cities, a few weeks ago. Young men and women dragged themselves through four weary days and nights of shuffling—to win a fame so momentary that if it came in time to reach the first edition of the morning papers, the second wiped it out. New York might hold the championship at seven in the morning; by noon the trophy had made at least two circuits of the country.

Dance-halls, it seems, are getting back to normal. Wherever the wreath of victory hangs, there, for the moment, peacefully it rests. One stag is down. But the chase goes on.

There is a whole world of records waiting to be broken. Employments that have never seemed particularly competitive have been the métier of new champions. Dish-washing, for example. Thirty-one hours without stopping is the mark set by Miss Susie Hetnock, of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. Miss Hetnock washes dishes professionally, in the Hotel Pantall. When she set her mark, a reporter of the New York World asked her for a statement. "Hell. It wasn't much," she told him. "I done it just for fun. I think I will give them long distance nuts something useful to think about and I hop to it."

Then there is the onion-shipping record. The old mark fell, if we remember rightly, on the twenty-first of April. Subsequently, twenty-three competitors set out the other day in Atlantic City to hang up a new long distance knitting record. Twenty-two of the volunteers were women. One was a versatile young man. His name was Peter Gaudette. He lasted for five hours. Mrs. Martha Lowe, seventy-five years old, and a great-grandmother, lasted twelve. Eight women made a day and a night of it. They were ready to go on. But the judges stopped them. A record had been written on the rock of ages—five sweaters, twenty mufflers, and a baby's jacket added to the world's supply of goods.

Records are falling in the least expected places. It doesn't do to ask your neighbor why he wears this medal on his chest. He may, without your knowing it, have walked off with the grass-cutting championship of North America. Shovelling the winter ashes from the furnace, driving a motor car without a license, rollerskating on one foot, ironing the lapels on dinner-coats—all these are fields in which new records have still to be established. And lest it be thought that no one will attempt them, consider the case of Mr. Alfred Hatos. Ten years ago Mr. Hatos was an acrobat who performed various feats suspended in mid-air, exhibiting the power of his teeth. Recently, a man of fifty-six, he conceived the idea of establishing the long distance tooth-clenching record beyond the peradventure of a doubt. He rides in the sidecar of a motorcycle. His son-in-law proceeds him in an automobile. The son-in-law trails a ten foot line that Mr. Hatos grapples with his teeth. And in all seriousness, the two of them set out from New York for Philadelphia, a distance of some ninety miles.

Only a clinic could tell us all the reasons why we are passing through this flurry of excitement over "records," why young women dance for ninety-six hours without stopping to catch their breath—while their great-grandmothers knit all night and Mr. Hatos rides to Philadelphia with his jaws locked on a leather strap. In part, of course, it is the emaciated ego craving self-expression. Stenographers who serve six times a week as sounding-boards for uninspired businessmen, bank clerks who consecrate their working days to adding columns of deposits that belong to someone else, rise naturally to seize an eminence of their own. There is a good deal of automatic imitation

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in the process, too. The incentive is more easily accepted for the reason that it prompts action in some everyday pursuit. (We exclude the specialty of Mr. Hatos.)

Record breaking is a normal human aspiration. Since the days when Hercules pursued the Arcadian stag for twelve uninterrupted months and brought it back to Eurystheus, men have been claiming new long distance marks. Perhaps we may thank the aftermath of war for the present spurt in interest. From 1914 on, the whole world has been breaking records. Record shipments of troops and record dumps of shells; record crops of wheat and record tons of steel. Organization of victory required that production and economy be dramatized for the beginner; we needed "records," so that we could break them. And our enthusiasm for new marks carried over into peace time, along with the competitive spirit of war itself. In the days after the armistice we had record "drives" for charity, record airplane flights from Halifax to Ireland, record productions in the movies. Perhaps, in getting around to record dancing Marathons and record onion-shipping, the tail of this particular record python is giving its last flick, at sundown.

The Program of Reaction

THE great affliction of American politics is the failure of the party system to frame clear cut issues. Our parties divide on men and on traditions. They do not divide on genuine interests and issues that are pressing today. The voter who believes that property interests are paramount and that human interests should properly be subordinated may vote either of the major tickets, assured that his views are shared by the party leaders. The man who believes in a square deal for labor and the paramountcy of human interests has an equally elusive choice. And the result is that we do not really settle anything, through political action. The conflict of economic and social interests works itself out in its own way, outside of politics, or fails to work itself out at all.

Little by little, however, real economic interests are taking on political form. Labor, long content with the illusory formula, "Help your friends, hit your enemies" in either party, is obviously developing toward a more responsible political attitude. On the other side, the National Manufacturers' Association is working toward the creation of an avowed party of reaction. For the present, to be sure, it contents itself with the discredited bipartisan tactics which labor has so unsuccessfully applied. It has adopted a platform, which it proposes to lay before both the national conventions, with the hope of securing sufficient recognition from both to make more active intervention in politics unnecessary. But however feeble the tactics, there is nothing feeble in the platform itself. It is a succinct and adequate statement of the program of reaction.

It begins with the declaration that it is not the function of our government to own or operate industry. It should not compete with private citizens in any form of industry they may undertake. That means, of course, opposition to government ownership of railways and ships, and to the parcels post and postal savings services. The platform guardedly expresses a demand for the repeal of the Sherman anti-trust law. "Competition should not be compelled where cooperation more beneficially promotes the public interest."

The platform is eloquent in its demand for tax reform. The framers evidently regard the excess profits tax as a live issue, and condemn it bitterly on the ground that it ignores the relation between risk and return of enterprise, and pyramids its burden. They urge a reduction in income surtaxes, as depriving industry of free capital. What they desire is a tax on gross final sales, and new and varied forms of indirect taxation.

They favor permissive consolidation of existing railway systems under conditions promoting economies of operation, and maintaining competitive rivalry in service. That is, no action that would deprive any company of its obstructive differential advantages. They favor a plan for interrelating rail, water and motor truck transportation. That means primarily the suppression of truck competition with the railways. They would prohibit railway strikes, and establish the open shop generally. They would abolish the present system of restrictive regulation of immigration and adopt the plan of selective immigration. They advocate in veiled terms a shipping subsidy and reiterate their faith in the protective tariff.

It is a program that suffers in no point from want of consistency. It demands, in effect, that the employing interest shall be recognized as the paramount interest in American life. It asserts a monopoly of private business, whether the system works well or ill. It seeks to shift the burden of government, so far as practicable, to the consuming public, that is, the worker and the small investor. It aims at bringing labor to terms through the emasculation of the unions and the admission, without other limit than suitability to serve, of foreign laborers.

We are grateful to the National Manufacturers' Association. They have earmarked plainly the policies that are best calculated to serve the capitalistic interest. They may secure the adoption of these policies by the Republican or the Democratic party. No one will be left in the dark as to the origin and tendency of these policies. There will remain no doubt as to the fundamental quality of the party that is most hospitable to them. We shall be on the road toward a division of parties on realistic lines, and the beginnings of political progress.

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"He's Got a Kid and a Cadillac"

THE clean smell of young green leaves is on the air. The invigorating tang of freshly turned earth is on the wind. Dreams of wanderings, of the unknown miles, of sweet sudden exile steal into the mind.

The clean, invigorating smell of young gasoline mingles with the perfume of the leaves and the earth. Dreams of wanderings, of new paint, of new tires, of better mileages steal into the mind.

The slingshot and the fishing rod are not so well or so often made as they used to be. Clothes whose pockets were once filled with buckshot and earthworms are now soiled with oil and grease. The young men who used to play pool are now changing tires by the side of a concrete road. The business men who used to talk about McKinley are now talking about how-many-miles-to-the-gallon. The old fellows who were very wise about colts and could tell a gift-horse without even looking in his mouth are now swapping old fours for old sixes, old sixes for old eights.

The voice of the self-starter is heard in the land. Old rust is being scraped away, old rubber is being thrown out onto the speculative building lots, last year's five-passenger is being tuned up. People who have been neighboring strangers all winter are coming together fraternally, gathering socially at the sound of a missing cylinder. The centre of life, for months dormant, is alive again.

The silent stranger with the black beard and the long gun used to come riding into town, and the small boys and their grandfathers would crowd around him and stare and wonder and perhaps ask who he was and where he came from. Now there are open mouths and slouching peaceful loafers staring at the nickel-hooded runabout with the disc wheels and the license plates from the next state.

In the suburbs on sunny Sunday afternoons the family used to roll the lawn, and plant things and whittle. Now all the kids are watching or helping dad put in the new spark-plugs. Later in the day they will all go for a ride, not so much because the weather smells of spring as to see if she's *running* right.

I will lift up mine eyes to the hills. People used often to say and feel something like that. Now there are just two kinds of hills to an average young American: those you can make on high and those you can't.

People used to have large open fireplaces, and they cooked everything at them and sat about them when they had finished eating. A later period glorified, as the centre of home life, the kitchen range, the starting place of all good pie. Now people have steam heat, and go the delicatessen store. The Lares and Penates haven't died. They are immortal. They have only moved out into the little garage with the galvanized tin roof, and people are worshipping them now just as much lying on their backs tightening the chassis nuts as when they were gazing at dying embers. The American hearth is now the Ford. Ford and home it is now, rather than hearth and home.

All this has come to stay. The Penates and the Lares have moved for good. Salt water may get into the Mexican and all the other oil wells, but America won't stop living on four wheels. Mr. Steinmetz will help us out. Electric Motors. Storage for a while, and later power transmitted by wireless. Thousands of cars humming along country roads between stone fences covered with uneatable raspberries. All of them moving by air-line power. Government power vs. private power: sparks through the air: the great social question of the next century. Instead of the Buick sign at the top of the grade, people will read: "Government juice makes this hill on high."

Way back in the days of coaches and flintlocks all the degrees of human value from noble down through gentleman and merchant to commoner were translated into clothes. You knew a man's worth, in position and fortune, by the fineness of his linen and his beaver. Now everybody dresses alike, but if you want to know what kind of a party is going on down at number forty-two see if there are more Cadillacs than Buicks, or more Fords than either. The only street longer than McCall Street in America is Gasoline Alley.

Our neighbors' and our friends' accomplishments are measured by the car they own. It must of course be a new one. Car by car, one moves up from class to class. Sinclair Lewis tells us that when a Packard has been secured one is pretty sure of being safely near the top of the ladder.

Hear the young men talking about their college friends now living out west. (In some countries children have names. In America all cars have them.)

"Smith?" he says, "Oh, Smith's doing very nicely. Only twenty-eight, and he's already got a kid —and a Cadillac."

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Has France A Legal Case?

IN the discussions in the press, justification of the French invasion of the Ruhr has arisen for the most part out of general considerations: we fought on the side of the French and against the Germans. Germany did much damage to France and is under moral as well as treaty obligations to make reparation. France has a right to reparation. If Germany fails to meet her obligations France is justified in seizing German territory and property. Such is a brief epitome of the arguments by which France's course is defended. On the other hand, the question of legality has received surprisingly little attention and surprisingly superficial treatment.

Our "Sense for Legality"

So largely has the question of the legality of France's course been passed over, or else conceded without argument, that one may well ask: Are we losing our sense for legality in general? A lawyer's "letter to the editor," in one of our leading newspapers recently adopted the positions of M. Poincaré and elaborated them, to make out what looked like an impregnable argument in favor of the French contention. But how did he do this? By ignoring completely the only provision of the Versailles Treaty that fixes the limits of territory that might be occupied by the Allied armies. That provision is found in paragraph 428 of the Treaty. It reads:

> As a guarantee for the execution of the present Treaty by Germany, the German territory situated to the west of the Rhine, together with the bridgeheads, will be occupied by the Allied and Associated troops for a period of fifteen years from the coming into force of the present Treaty.

The language of this provision is so clear and simple, there is such an aspect of finality to it, that it would seem incredible that any power should venture to ignore or evade it. What legal justification does M. Poincaré put forward for occupying territory not included within the limits of this paragraph? He bases his case upon sections 17 and 18 of Annex II of Part VIII, and also upon paragraph 248. The two sections are as follows:

> 17. In case of default by Germany in the performance of any obligation under this part of the Treaty, the Commission will forthwith give notice of such default to each of the interested Powers and may make such recommendations as to the action to be taken in consequence of such default as it may think necessary.
>
> 18. The measures which the Allied and Associated Powers shall have the right to take, in case of voluntary default by Germany, and which Germany agrees not to regard as acts of war, may include economic and financial prohibitions and reprisals and in general such other measures as the respective Governments may determine to be necessary in the circumstances.

Paragraph 248 makes reparation payments "The first charge upon all the assets and revenues of the German Empire and its constituent states."

Do any of the stipulations just quoted give France the right to invade German territory beyond the limits prescribed in paragraph 428? M. Poincaré contends that France has that right under the words "in general such other measures" etc., of section 18.

Before answering the question just stated, two important principles of legal interpretation must be borne in mind. In the interpretation of contracts, laws, constitutions, treaties, it is a rule of law that every such document must be treated as in harmony with itself. In other words, a plain and specific stipulation must not be disregarded in favor of some general provision elsewhere in the document. An example of this is found in our own Constitution and its interpretation by the Supreme Court. That document makes very clear stipulations of the things that Congress may do and of those that it may not do. Attached to the positive functions of Congress is the so-called "general welfare clause," which gives to Congress the right to make "all laws which shall be necessary for carrying into execution the foregoing powers." It has been the uniform practice of the Supreme Court to insist that legislation of this general character must be in harmony with the positive delegations of power made to Congress, and must not provide for doing things prohibited to Congress.

Under this rule of law the French case has not a leg to stand on. Any American court would decide unhesitatingly that the specific language of paragraph 428 must prevail as against any deductions that might be drawn from the general terms of section 18.

The Basket Clause

The second law principle has to do with the interpretation of section 18 itself. In all legal enactments and treaties it becomes necessary to amplify the meaning of certain provisions by citing instances of their application, and after noting several such cases it is usual to end the matter with some general statement. This gives us a so-called "basket clause," which is resorted to in order to save words, since it is often impossible to mention all the applications of a law provision.

Such "basket clauses" are one of the most fruitful grounds of litigation, for the temptation is ever present to try to pluck out of the basket things that the lawmakers never intended to put there. Hence it became necessary a long time ago to establish a law rule for their interpretation—the so-called ejusdem generis rule, whose meaning is that particulars not enumerated in such a given law clause must be of the same general character as

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those enumerated. Let me illustrate again: In a state having a homestead law a creditor gets from a court a writ allowing him to obtain settlement of a debt by selling "Property of the debtor, such as household and kitchen furniture, watches and jewelry, securities, and such other property as may be necessary for satisfying the claim." The creditor proceeds to execute his writ, sells all the articles mentioned, and then finds that the proceeds do not cover the debt. "Well then, let us sell his house," says the creditor. But here the debtor objects: "You are reading into your writ a meaning that the court could not have had, for the court knows very well that we have a homestead law in this state. Therefore it could not have given you the right to sell my home." And any court would certainly sustain the objection. Here the words of the writ "such other property" must be interpreted in accordance with the rule ejusdem generis; the creditor has no right to interpret the "basket clause" of his writ so as to entitle him to sell property of a different legal status than the kinds enumerated.

An Impossible Deduction

In France's case the "basket clause" is indeed very inclusive: "in general such other measures as the respective Governments may determine to be necessary in the circumstances." Standing alone this clause would permit the Allied governments to take any action whatever against Germany. But apply the law rule just mentioned, and we must conclude that they have only the right to adopt such measures as fall naturally into the same classification as the particulars mentioned in the previous part of the sentence; namely, "economic and financial prohibitions and reprisals." Now to pretend that the invasion of a neighbor's territory can be deduced from this "basket" would be a most monstrous conclusion; to accept it would be to put an end to all treaty-observance, for such a wresting of the meaning of words would give to a strong power the right to read into treaty stipulations any meaning that might suit its whim.

That M. Poincaré has here wrested the language of the Treaty to suit his purpose can be shown by other considerations. If the treaty-makers had contemplated, when they drew up section 18, that its terms might be interpreted as justifying an invasion of German territory, it appears humanly impossible that they could have so sharply restricted their right of occupation as they did in paragraph 428. This latter paragraph must have laid down the utmost limits of occupation intended by them, else they would have saved themselves by some modifying clause.

Moreover, that they did not intend to provide for further occupations can be shown by at least three other considerations:

1. When the Treaty was about to be adopted in June 1919, the German peace commissioners objected to the large powers accorded to the Reparation Commission, intimating the fear that they would usurp rights within Germany which would conflict with Germany's territorial sovereignty. This allegation appeared to the treaty-makers so monstrous that they used sharp language in repelling it. In their note of June 16, 1919, they replied thus.

> In short, the observations of the German delegation present a view of the Commission so distorted and so inexact that it is difficult to believe that the clauses of the Treaty have been calmly or carefully examined. It is not an engine of oppression or a device for interfering with German sovereignty. It has no forces at its command; it has no executive powers within the territory of Germany.

Here the objection may be made that this language applies only to the Commission, not to the Allied governments themselves. To which the answer is this: The Commission was established by those governments as their organ for carrying the Treaty into effect. Would anybody make the imputation, so dishonoring to Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Orlando and Wilson, that when they laid down the functions of the Commission as here quoted they did so with the mental reservation that any one of the powers themselves might usurp its functions by interfering with German sovereignty?

2. The French government in 1920 actually did make that assumption when it occupied Frankfort. But within a brief time it recognized its error and withdrew its troops. At the same time it assured the British government that henceforth it would act only in agreement with its other allies. Here France recognized that any decision by the Allies to adopt measures against Germany must be taken by unanimous agreement—a point that must be recalled a little later on.

3. When in January 1920, the Treaty ratifications were exchanged at Paris, M. Clemenceau, still Premier, assured the German signatories that this act terminated the application of such sanctions as belong to war. Evidently the "Tiger" must have understood what the Treaty means; and it is not surprising that he was one of the few eminent Frenchmen who opposed the invasion of the Ruhr. Or would anybody be bold enough to claim that this invasion is not "such a sanction as belongs to war?"

Decision not Unanimous

If we examine the manner in which the decision to go into the Ruhr was adopted, France's case is still further damaged. In section 13 of the same Annex II it is stipulated that any vote of the Commission on "questions of the interpretation of this Part of the present Treaty" must be unanimous; also that "abstention from voting is to be treated as a vote against the proposal under discussion."

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Now it would seem that there can be no doubt that when the Commission voted to declare Germany in voluntary default it was voting on "the interpretation of this Part of the Treaty"; also that Sir John Bradbury's abstention from voting amounted to a negative vote by England.

What then? Section II goes on to provide as follows:

> In case of any difference of opinion among the Delegates, which cannot be solved by reference to their Governments, upon the question whether a given case is one which requires a unanimous vote for its decision or not, such difference shall be referred to the immediate arbitration of some impartial person. . . .

But here was a disagreement and no arbitration; and yet France and her group of powers decided the matter for themselves.

M. Poincaré's Interpretation

The logic by which M. Poincaré justified that step has been sharply attacked by various authorities, especially in England. He made a show of legality indeed by alleging that the words: "Such other measures as the respective Governments may determine," in section II above, mean these governments individually—in other words, that each of the governments or any group of them might take such measures. But this is an impossible interpretation in view of the general form of expression used by the treaty-makers elsewhere in the peace document. That they knew how to use precise language when they wanted to speak of the powers individually they showed in the section immediately preceding: The Commission is directed to give notice "to each of the interested Powers"; and numbers of other passages might be quoted to enforce this point. The interpretation of the word "respective" by M. Poincaré is forced, and the forcing becomes nothing short of monstrous when the right of invading another country in a time of peace is the end sought.

So much for the question of the legality of the invasion from the standpoint of the Treaty itself. But what has international law to say about the matter? International law knows no such conception as the invasion of a country which is not ipso facto war. That Germany has offered no armed resistance does not alter by one whit the fact that France is now making war upon Germany. That is the standpoint of international law, for which no citation of authorities is necessary.

What, finally, is to be said of the legal aspect of the acts of the French military authorities since entering the Ruhr region? I shall not go into any atrocity stories here. I confine myself to these admitted facts: that the French have arrested and tried before their military courts numerous Germans, whose only offence was that they discharged their duties of loyalty to their own country; that these courts have imposed heavy fines and long terms of imprisonment upon them; and the further fact that the French are seizing and confiscating the property of private individuals.

France went into the Ruhr ostensibly to collect what Germany owes her; but the Hague Convention of 1907, to which France solemnly pledged her faith, forbids the collection of debts by means of armed force, except where the debtor state has rejected arbitration. But Germany has never rejected arbitration. Furthermore, paragraph 248 of the Treaty, under which France is acting, makes only the assets and revenues of the German national and state governments liable for meeting reparation payments. Yet the French military has not scrupled to confiscate the property of municipalities and even private persons. And many of the deeds of violence against individuals—imprisonments and expulsions of Germans as penalties for refusing to become traitors to their own country—are expressly condemned by the war regulations adopted at the Hague. Note well: condemned even in times of war. But M. Poincaré claims to be at peace with Germany. Will he also claim that the laws of peace are more severe than those of war?

I shall not attempt to characterize further the course of the French armies on the Ruhr, but rather let this characterization come from the little state of Finland. In February about two hundred and forty Finnish judges, law professors and eminent lawyers adopted a strongly-worded declaration against what they called France's "breach of law." Their protest was based, apparently, not upon any breach of the Treaty of Versailles, but upon the treatment of the German population of the Ruhr. Having pointed out that, despite the fact that France and Germany are at peace with each other, German citizens have been dragged before French courts-martial and condemned, these Finns said further: "They were condemned although they were guilty of no crime: for it has been accounted a universally valid principle of international law that the inhabitants of a country cannot be compelled by a foreign power to take part in acts that conflict with their fidelity to their own country and injure it." They expressed further their "profound disapproval of this breach of law."

A Reversal of Rôle

That this sharp criticism comes precisely from Finland should be felt in France as a heavy blow morally for M. Poincaré's policy, for it recalls a time when Finland was the sufferer and France the country to protest. When Russia was doing things in Finland before the war such as France is now doing on the Ruhr, some four hundred members of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate sent a strong protest to the Russian Duma in favor of the Finns. Now Senators and Deputies are silent. It is Finland that protests.

WILLIAM C. DREHER.

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What the Worker Doesn't Get*

THERE is no word which is more frequently used in the same sentence with labor than the word production. An entire engineering theory of management is based on the assumption that true industrial progress is to be made only by increases in productivity. The enemies of trade-unions charge that some of their rules and practices interfere with efficient production, and hence that they are to be condemned. Many friends of the unions are eager to encourage the growing interest in production on their part. When it is asked whether increases in productivity lead to any advantage to labor other than such advantage as might possibly arise from increased profits of employers, it is said that higher productivity results in lower unit costs, which in turn reduce prices and the cost of living, and so increase the purchasing power of wages. When demands are made for a minimum living wage, it is said that it cannot be paid because the national income is not large enough, and that the only hope of improving labor's status is in a larger volume of production.

Recent Fundamental Studies

This is a point of view which on the surface seems reasonable, but it rests on a series of assumptions which have not until recently been tested on the basis of facts statistically measured. It so happens that we have accumulated in the last few years a good deal of information about the physical volume of production and about wages. Is it true that production increases, and that it increases more rapidly than the population? Is it true that the purchasing power of wages increases as production increases? What is the actual relation between wages and productivity?

Careful studies of the production of important goods have been made by several economists, and while these studies do not cover the whole field, they do include nearly all the basic commodities in the various industries. In agriculture, for instance, they include the staples, though not the consumers' articles made out of the staples such as loaves of bread or packages of shredded wheat. Their comprehensiveness results from catching the flow of goods near the source. The chief criticism of them is that they may not sufficiently indicate the elaboration of the manufacturing process which takes place from year to year in the course of dressing up goods for the market. But if this defect were remedied the figures would undoubtedly show a more rapid increase in productivity than appears from the data dealing with the basic products.

The figures prove that the production of physical goods in the United States increased about 80 percent in the 22 years between 1899 and 1920. During the same period the population increased about 40 percent. Production was increasing, therefore, at a rate about twice as rapid as the increase in population. If we calculate the increase in production per capita, we find that it was nearly 30 percent for this period. If we eliminate the effect of the ups and downs of production incident to temporary booms and depressions, we find that production was increasing at a normal rate of a little less than 2 percent a year for each man, woman and child in the country. Manufacturing production increased at a more rapid rate than total production, which includes agriculture and mining.

The conclusion from these facts is that it would have been possible for the goods received by every person in the country to increase at the rate of about 2 percent a year during this period, and that at the end of the period everyone might have received every year about 30 percent more than he received at the beginning. This could have happened without any change in the relative distribution of income—that is, without giving labor, for instance, any of the share of the earnings of industry formerly claimed by property owners. Wage-earners, salary-earners, farmers, capitalists, traders and everyone else might have been 30 percent better off—not in meaningless dollars, but in actual purchasing power—at the end of the period than at the beginning. If the theories mentioned in the first paragraph were valid, real wages—or the purchasing power of wages—would have been at least 30 percent higher in 1920 than in 1899.

Curtailed Purchasing Power

What are the facts about wages? Very careful studies, calculated from census figures and other sources, show that during this period the purchasing power of wages, far from increasing, actually declined. In 1904 and 1909 the yearly incomes of factory workers in the United States could buy slightly less than in 1899. In 1914 they could buy only 90 percent as much as in 1899. This fact is worth remembering, by the way, in discussions of the increase of wages during the war, in which the base of the increase is usually taken as 1914. In 1919, one of the years in which factory wage-earners were so widely accused of profiteering, their average yearly earnings could not buy quite as much as in 1899, in 1904 or in 1909, though they had recovered from the 1914 slough of despond. The indications are that since 1920 real wages have at last risen above the 1899 level—though not more than 5 percent above. We have, therefore, a drop of 10 percent in real wages, followed by an increase of 5 percent above the 1899 level, to compare with an increase of 30 percent in

* The statistical material on which this article is based is explained in greater detail in a paper by the same author in the proceedings of the annual meeting of the American Economic Association, December, 1922.

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per capita production during the same period.

It does not look as if there were any great reality behind the advice to labor that it should cease trying to enlarge its share of the product, and instead devote all its attention to enlarging the product. Of what use to the wage-earner are increases in productivity if he does not share in the result? What has slavery to the machine brought him in the past thirty years? Trade-unions would be justified in insisting upon restrictions of production, if such restrictions added to the comfort and peace of mind of their members, so long as they have no genuine assurance that their real incomes will increase as per capita production increases. Here is another case where the sense of the common man has seemed to hit the truth more nearly than the hasty conclusions of experts. Increased productivity adds to the possibility of higher real wages, but that possibility remains to be realized.

Dividing the Consumer's Dollar

The discussion cannot stop here; otherwise most persons would draw the unwarranted conclusion that what labor has lost by this trend employers and capitalists have gained. That does not seem to be true, in the census years up to and including 1919. We can estimate what share of the product of factories at least went to the various classes concerned, from the figures of the Census of Manufactures. These give us the total "value added by manufacture," which may be split up into the amounts paid respectively for wages, for salaries and for the remainder which went chiefly to property owners under such heads as profits, interest, depreciation, rent, etc. The share of the value-product of factories which went in wages started at 42 percent in 1899 and ended at 42 percent in 1919, varying only as far as 40 percent in the meantime. The share which went to salaries started at 8 percent and rose to 13 percent in 1914 and 12 percent in 1919. The share which went to the property interest and minor miscellaneous expenses declined from 50 percent in 1899 to 46 percent in 1919. So the property owners did not, apparently, encroach on labor's percentage. Manufacturing industry as a whole must have received a decreasing per capita share of the product.

Of course it does not follow that employers and owners of industry did not profit from increased productivity. Their share went largely to the building up of capital goods—plants, machinery, etc. Their number is not so great as the number of wage-earners, and does not increase so rapidly. Therefore a constant or even a decreasing share for property in the growing production may net the individual owners substantial increases in real income.

But we are interested in discovering what happened to the increment of goods which labor helped to produce, but did not receive. One suggestion is that it was eaten up in a growing complexity, waste and profit in the process of distributing goods after they leave the farm and the factory. This seems to be supported by the observation that retail prices of food rose much further before the war than wholesale prices of food. It is also supported by the observation that the number of persons engaged in trade and finance grew from 6.4 percent of the gainfully employed in 1890 to 10.2 percent in 1920. But while it is likely that some of the surplus was absorbed here, it is hardly possible that such a small percentage of persons could have totally absorbed so large an increase.

Shocking as the discovery may be to those who accept current opinion about such matters, it appears from the statistics that the greater part of the increased production between 1899 and 1919 was absorbed by agriculture. Dr. Willford I. King of the National Bureau of Economic Research is responsible for the figures which indicate that the share of agriculture in the national income grew from 14 percent in 1899 to 20.4 percent in 1918. At the same time the percentage of gainfully employed persons engaged in agriculture fell from 36 percent in 1900 to 26 percent in 1920. Thus a much smaller proportion of the population was receiving, at the end of the period, a much larger share of the total income. Manufacturing's share of the total income grew only from 23 to 29 percent, while the number of persons engaged grew more rapidly, or from 18 to 27 percent. In mining and transportation the per capita share of income also decreased.

Farmers and Factories

In view of the large number of tenant farmers and the large amounts of farm mortgages, and in view of the rapid increases in value of good farming land, it would be incautious to assume that the average dirt farmer has profited to anything like the extent above indicated. It is also well to remember that many farmers sank their former profits by raising large crops and buying land at the peak prices, just at the edge of the precipitous drop of 1920-1921. But no farmer has a right to blame high factory wages for his misfortunes. As far as the share of the factory wage-earner in the national product is concerned, the farmer might be receiving today a yearly real income more than 30 percent above that which he received twenty-five years ago. The owner of farm lands and mortgages seems to be the greatest beneficiary of technological development.

The moral of this little excursion into statistics appears to be that we cannot trust the automatic operation of "economic laws" in the modern world to bring about an equitable distribution of work and wealth. Much investigation remains to be made before detailed results will be available. But the weight of such facts as we have is clearly on the side of the desirability of a much larger measure of social control in the distribution of income.

GEORGE SOULE.

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Russia—1923

II. Sanitary and Social Problems

EVEN before the famine in 1921 the health of the Russian people had suffered considerably through war and revolution, and in spite of the measures taken by the government and foreign relief organizations, the famine caused the death of at least three million people.

The great war and the Russian civil war had in reality not only cost the lives of three and a half millions directly, but had in addition encouraged an unusual outcrop of pests: typhus, cholera, typhoid, intestinal inflammation and dysentery, which assumed an epidemic character and were spread far and wide by the movement of troops, refugees and prisoners. Tuberculosis and digestive diseases had become widely diffused among the undernourished population, living under the most unhygienic conditions, and the cases of premature ageing were innumerable.

The famine brought to light a whole series of illnesses, often caused by the use of harmful food substitutes, and led to a dangerous new outbreak of the epidemics. From 1918 to 1922, it is estimated, there were between twenty and thirty million cases of typhus. That means that during recent years the whole of Russia has been scourged with this epidemic, which has caused the death of vast numbers of persons but has also made the population as a whole almost immune, as though by vaccination.

During these awful years the Russian medical institutions were disorganized in the extreme. Sanitary equipment and medical instruments have become more and more rare and have worn out; and the lack of medicine has grown continuously more urgent. The situation of the medical personnel has been one of acute difficulty, especially in the famine areas. Representatives of our organization have reported the cases of several doctors who have died of starvation, yet with what admirable courage these Russian medical men have fought the epidemics has been recounted by the Russian and foreign journalists who were on the spot during the most critical times. Isolated in small towns where the death-rate was terrible, cut off from the centres of culture at home and abroad, they still did all in their power to improve the conditions with such means as they had at hand.

Since the harvest of 1922 their situation, so far as food is concerned, has naturally been much improved; but the need for sanitary equipment and medicine is still great. Decentralization, introduced by the government's new economic policy, has deprived the medical institutions of funds from the central authorities; henceforth they must depend on local contributions to pay their working expenses. That such an arrangement, however admirable in normal times, plunges the sanitary organizations in the famine districts into terrible difficulties, is easily understood, since the local funds are extremely small and the demand upon them particularly heavy. Cooperating with the Russian and Ukrainian Red Cross and the Commissariat of Public Health, my organization has recently formed a committee for medicinal and sanitary relief, which sends to Russia completely equipped medicine chests, each sufficient for 1,000 invalids for three months, together with a quantity of medical instruments. Thus a double end is served: immediate aid is brought to a considerable number of sick people, and at the same time the doctors, condemned to inactivity and despair through lack of equipment, are enabled to resume activities so essential to the improvement of their country's hygiene. The rehabilitation of the medical organizations and staffs is of paramount importance, for their destruction would be a fatal loss for Russia.

Unemployment is another social problem which cries out for outside help for its solution.

The majority of the Russian peasants have always suffered from chronic unemployment. During the long winter months only those who live near the large towns could really count on employment—such as cab-drivers—and the insignificant home-industries of the peasants ameliorate their situation but little.

To this long annual idleness of the Russian peasant—possibly one of the chief reasons why agriculture has developed so slowly — may be ascribed also responsibility for the exceedingly primitive conditions under which the peasantry live. To provide some winter occupation which would give the peasants an extra source of income would be of the greatest advantage. For with their purchasing power increased, they could improve their farm equipment, and would at the same time develop needs whose satisfaction would profit both Russian and foreign industry as well. But at present the poverty of the Russian peasant in the famine districts is considerably aggravated by the fact that no less than one and half million of them have lost their domestic animals.

In February of this year, so M. Kalinin, president of the All-Russian Executive Committee, told me, there were in the famine districts nearly 150,000 unemployed men, and 500,000 in all Russia. For the most part they were officials, officers or landowners of the old bourgeoisie, who found it difficult to fit into Russia's present social organization. As they have never learned any trade it is difficult to employ them in positions of responsibility, M. Kalinin said, and yet they must be pro-

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vided with employment that will enable them to live in a normal fashion.

M. Kalinin was much concerned also at that time over the problem of the "war invalids", for whom scarcely anything could be done during the difficult years through which Russia has lately passed. Comparatively their number is fewer than in the Western countries, for owing to the hardships experienced in Russia a great number of the veterans of the great war have succumbed; while the civil war has left fewer of them, because its methods were at the same time less elaborate and more severe. According to Kalinin, however, there should be 200,000 to 300,000 registered disabled men in all of Russia, 65,000 of whom are in the famine districts.

"Help for the invalids," he told me, "has not been treated as part of the famine question; but the absolute necessity of finding some solution for this problem is now very patent. Considering their services to the country, and the bitterness they feel about being neglected, these disabled men deserve to be treated with special generosity."

Here, then, the foreign philanthropic organizations can still find a field of usefulness and one whose unpolitical character is beyond dispute. The sending of artificial limbs, especially for men who till the soil, would be of great assistance.

Child-relief is still another problem of enormous moment for the future of Russia.

In the campaign against the famine, special relief was given to the children, and some organizations have even allotted solely to children the foodstuffs which they distributed in the famine districts. This work has saved the lives of many of them, but the insufficiency of the relief given to their parents has created a fearful number of orphans. The number exceeds 1,300,000, if we include children deserted or lost by their parents during the famine.

The thousands of kitchens opened by foreign relief organizations, where the children came for a meal every day, have saved millions of little starving creatures from a cruel death; but clearly this is an emergency measure rather for temporary than for permanent relief.

But for all the societies which are interested in the starving Russian children, to continue their help till Russia is economically restored and able to take over the whole responsibility would be a most excellent thing. Aiding the Russian institutions for child-relief, providing the schools with means to distribute food among the children and helping the mothers to reduce the terrible child-mortality, would give proper completion to the relief work for the starving, which (even though it was far from adequate) was a splendid gesture of international sympathy and solidarity. Though it is the economic phase of the Russian problem which I wish particularly to discuss in this series of articles, I believe this brief indication of certain directions in which I hope work may still be carried on will be of service to those who have been attracted to the assistance of Russia. A feeling of simple humanity—because the land was devastated by a famine more cruel than history records—has inspired an unselfish work which has alleviated great and awful suffering, and has helped to disperse the suspicion and hatred which still stand between Russia and the outside world.

FRIDTJOF NANSEN.

[This is the second of a series by Dr. Nansen on current Russian problems. In subsequent articles he will discuss agricultural and industrial and financial reconstruction. —THE EDITORS.]

The Passing of the Pool-Room

FAR and away the brightest spot on Main Street, twenty years ago, was Elmer Bradley's animated Billiard Parlor. When the rest of the block from City Hall to the Baptist Church had gone to bed, there would always be two friendly arc-lights cutting discs of creamy white on Mr. Bradley's sidewalk. Long after the last postage stamp of the evening had found its way across the counter in Martin's Corner Drug Store, the red door of Mr. Bradley's Parlor still swung to the shoves of genial billiardists. From the street outside you heard the click of ivory on ivory; the faint, distant thud of a weary ball that had dropped to its appointed pocket.

There was a long hall, if you went inside, with six great bandy-legged tables straddling it. Their green tops sparkled in the glare of vivid drop-lights. They looked, from the door, like water-holes in a shadowy Sahara. And when the long cords that held the bright bulbs swayed, the whole room rocked in light and shadow. Black patches chased each other up the walls, chased each other down again. You caught swift glimpses of champions who looked down from tessellated picture-frames: Dan Patch, who paced the mile in one fifty-seven and a quarter; Cy Young, bent double, for the delivery of his famous cannon-ball; Ad Wolgast, a hundred and thirty-three pounds ringside, trained to the pink of condition and girdled with a flag. Strangely, one lithograph had got here somehow, flanked by the immortals: a quiet William Penn accepting wampum from the Indians.

Almost hidden from the light that played around the room, thrust back in its farthest corner, rose

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the enormous throne prepared for Shoes Shined While You Wait. Two iron foot-rests knelt before it: slippery fragments, treacherously arched, against which the most determined foothold never held. Above them worked a spirited young Greek, applying from an endless quantity of round tin boxes what looked suspiciously like portions of the same original polish—flourishing, through a series of short staccato snorts, the flannel polishing-cloth that would end its labors with one sharp reverberating crack. "Sam," this was. And around Sam revolved the humor of the institution. He was its merry andrew and its harlequin. For the humorous fact was, having been born a Greek, English was not his native language. You could tell that from the way he talked. "Hi, Sam!" would shout the entering guest. "How's business?" —"She's pretty good," from Sam. And the room would roar its laughter.

But she wasn't pretty good. She probably was pretty bad. To marvel at this prodigy—full-grown, of age, apparently in possession of his wits: and yet unable to speak the English language—was fit employment for the sportsman; but not to have his shoes shined. As empty as the throne of England on the heels of Charles the First stood that great chair save for the infrequent coronations of a travelling salesman. You came to Bradley's not to have your boots glossed but to play the game.

You entered, after an appropriate exchange of courtesies and a denial that you had accepted wooden money since you parted with the company present, and hooked your coat on the short-armed rack that grew in the marshy floor behind the water-cooler. You advanced, with an interchange of insults as you passed each group of players, to the choosing of an ash. Four rows of cues adorned the walls. One row had no tips. A second had tips, but also locks: aristocrats, here, of the cue world—as individual, as sanitary, and as seldom used as the gold-initialled shaving-mugs on the top shelf in Winkel's Barber Shop. Two racks left; from one of them you chose your lance. "Open break, or closed?" you asked your adversary. If closed, the gentle bumping of the corner ball against a once resilient cushion. If open, then the fury of the whirlwind in your forward thrust; a lunge that would drive a sabre through a safe-door.

"Red ball in the corner pocket."—All manner of variations to the game. You played it straight-away, for a run of fifty. You played it in "rotation." You drew a pea from a canvas pod, and won when you sank your own right number. You stood a little leather flagon on its end, and scored if you toppled it at the end of a swift flight around the table. And all the time, if yours was the new table from Chicago equipped with subterranean passageways, the dead balls coursed with a satisfactory hollow rattle along the corridors of time, to drop like striped and numbered Easter eggs into a wicker basket.

All manner of variations, too, in the way to make your shot: the resounding boom of a fugitive, cornered after two escapes, and fairly blasted; the high-arched thumb and nervous stab that made the simplest shot look difficult; the "back spin," theoretically imparted at the bottom of the ball, that took up an inch or two of speed and occasionally an inch of table. A good shot sometimes brought an audience. You chalked your cue with a nonchalance that hid some wonder at your own achievement; you studied the next shot warily while the gallery discussed what would have happened to the last one had you played it differently.

After all, it was the gallery that mattered. Four fifths of the time, in Bradley's, you yourself weren't playing. You considered with a speculative eye the strategy of two less practiced adversaries. You lounged in the long row of venerable chairs that ran along the wall below the cue-racks. You rolled cigarettes that unrolled themselves unless you watched them. You blew quantities of smoke into a cooperative cloud.

And you talked. Into the smoky swirl you tossed bits of borrowed wisdom. If you were young, you discussed the respective merits of the young ladies in the town: with generous guesses as to what might be expected of them once they settled down. If you were old, you talked about the parties of your youth or the strange taste you noticed in the city water. You debated all the baseball scores and pointed out their inner meaning. You marvelled at the perversity of employers, school boards, rent-collectors, bill-collectors, tax-collectors, hailstorms. Here, once more, were the old Sioux braves foregathered round the fire, while the young bucks listened to their tales and fondled the crescent blade of each illustrious hatchet. While the arc-lights flickered in the street outside, Fred Hovey told again how the new brakeman on the Burlington had tried to put him off at the wrong station. For the thousandth time Ben Gilley filled the same straight flush that had won him a pot of eighteen dollars and a ticket to or from St. Louis. Ed Speir never for a moment let it be forgotten that it was he who said they'd find oil upstate if any one had sense enough to drill for it.

Night wore on. The young braves stole off along dark alleys to paternal wigwams. Smoke banked itself in layers on Mr. Bradley's ceiling. One by one the green pools of light winked out in darkness. The red door swung to the shoves of uncrowned champions. "Good night, Eddie. Be good. And don't take any wooden money!"

. . . .

Sam, erstwhile bootblack, but apparently the discoverer of more lucrative employment, is a Croesus in Thermopylae. Dan Patch has shuffled

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off this mortal coil. Bradley limps from the bird-shot Caesar Beckley drilled into his leg one morning, hunting quail. But the two arc-lights still cut their friendly circles on his pavement. Only, this time, the line between light and shadow no longer stands out sharply; Main Street, in these two decades, has built itself a Great White Way.

Brighter lights are sparkling just around the corner. What used to be Chic Harley's feed-store is today the Plaza Theatre. Flaming posters, propped along the curbstone, bill "The Girl Who Didn't Think." There is a cabaret, low-arched and hung with Christmas tinsel, in the posters; at a table in the foreground the girl who lost her way is ogled by a well dressed villain. It is Cleo Tichenor herself who plays the leading role; the line forms on the left. It edges up to the ticket window, ready with its war tax. "Two, please." The young lady in the plate-glass cubicle snaps a button; two narrow strips of cardboard issue from an unexpected fissure. "Three for me." The crowd keeps coming. More than one old-timer will be missing when the roll is called in Bradley's Billiard Parlor.

And more than one young drummer-boy. Lads who, twenty years ago, would have spent their evenings thrilling to the yarns Fred Hovey swapped with Earl Devoe across a green-topped table, now sit in judgment on two comedians broadcasting from a vaudeville in Honolulu. The quality of humor is not greatly strained, for all the airy miles it's come. But no longer does it find its forum in the pool-room. Where the young braves gather now is Sprau's Electric Shop. Virtues of the oscillatory tube and two-stage amplifier are discussed professionally by youngsters in "short pants." The lad who hasn't made himself a variometer is an unlicked cub from Outer Gaul.

. . . .

Bradley's isn't what it used to be. There are enough of the faithful left to keep four tables running. And Saturday nights tobacco smoke will frost the ceiling as it used to, though it never gets below the picture-moulding, or dims the peerage on the walls. But Bradley's as a semi-public institution, Bradley's as the Valhalla of the sportsman, *that* Bradley's is no more.

Movies and radio and motor car have done to it what they did to the rest of Main Street. Twenty years ago the town itself was just a smokeless pool-room. Four walls not a great deal wider than Elmer Bradley's circumscribed it. Now those walls are gone. The motor has a cruising radius of a hundred miles and more; the radio, another thousand; the movie can go to the ends of the earth, and bring back trash or Treasure Island.

Main Street sheds its isolation. Bradley's lights fade out at ten o'clock, and no one misses them.

One more frontier passing.

CHARLES MERZ.

Newspaper Morals

I HAVE been reading the new Canons of Journalism and thinking about Upton Sinclair. It is interesting to imagine the feelings with which the author of The Brass Check, and his numerous followers, must have received this statement of ethics which was adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors at its Washington meeting.

Mr. Sinclair, as everyone knows, preaches the doctrine that the press is the willing slave of capitalism, engaged in suppressing truth and spreading falsehood in order to help keep the mass of the people in subjection. (This statement oversimplifies Mr. Sinclair a little, but not unfairly.) Partly because of his efforts and those of other writers with a similar thesis, and partly because of the human impulse to believe the worst whenever possible, a large part of all the people in this country have come to accept the view stated. I should not be surprised if they were a majority; though even these sceptics, of course, continue to read newspapers and to be influenced by them. In fact, they are cynical about the press only when they remember to be, which is usually only when the subject comes up in the course of conversation.

With what a shock, then, must Mr. Sinclair and his adherents have met these formal declarations of a society which includes all the editors of the important metropolitan papers:

> A journalist who uses his power for any selfish or otherwise unworthy purpose is faithless to a high trust. . . . . Promotion of any private interest contrary to the general welfare is not compatible with honest journalism. . . . . Partisanship which knowingly departs from the truth . . . . . is subversive of a fundamental principle of the profession. . . . . By every consideration of good faith a newspaper is constrained to be truthful. . . . . News reports should be free from opinion or bias of any kind. . . . . A newspaper should not publish unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without opportunity given to the accused to be heard. . . . . It is the privilege, as it is the duty, of a newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of its own mistakes of fact or opinion. . . . . A newspaper cannot escape conviction of insincerity if while professing high moral purpose it supplies incentives to base conduct such as are found in details of crime and vice, publication of which is not demonstrably for the general good.

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It is easy to see that two sets of ideas could hardly be in more complete head-on collision than those of Mr. Sinclair and those of the editors who drew up, and pledged themselves to, these Canons. Mr. Sinclair will reply that the editors adopted these good resolutions with their tongues in their cheeks, in order to lull the people of the United States to a false sense of security, thereby making easier the work they are doing for their capitalistic masters. It is true that the editors have described what ought to be, not what is. But it is also true that Mr. Sinclair's interpretation is not accurate.

Whether or not his facts are correct (and I have no knowledge which affirms or denies his specific statements) his spiritual interpretation of the situation in America is far afield. Like so many other people, he sees in solid blacks and whites things which are actually gray. Particularly, he overestimates (1) the intelligence of those he attacks (2) the degree of deliberate design and far-sighted policy which underlies their efforts, and (3) their sophistication. He assumes that they are hypocrites, who know the better course and embrace the worse. Judge Gary makes a similar error when he believes that labor leaders intelligently and cynically follow a course they know to be harmful to the best interests of the workers, in a callous eagerness to line their own pockets with gold.

Such interpretations, it seems to me, show a deplorable lack of understanding of the facts of human nature. The chief business in life of every individual is to coddle his own self-esteem; and nothing is so destructive of this effort as hypocrisy. I believe it is a fair statement that ninety percent of the editors of the country's conservative papers sincerely endorse the doctrines they set forth. This is the result of a perfectly simple process of "natural selection." A metropolitan newspaper today is a serious business enterprise with a large invested capital and a heavy overhead. Naturally, a man does not attain to the important post of director of such an enterprise unless he has proved his efficiency; and efficiency often consists (not always, of course) first, in holding ideas which are in agreement with those of the active owners; and second, in doing such whole-hearted and absorbed work as no man ever accomplished with his tongue in his cheek. Speaking in general, such a man does not think and act as he does because he is an editor; he is an editor because he thinks and acts as he does.

Where Mr. Sinclair shows an extraordinary naïveté, if he is sincere (and I am sure he is) is in expecting anything else. Certainly, most newspapers support the capitalistic organization of society; but why not? This *is* a capitalistic society. Is the press any more completely a mirror of prevailing ideas than the schools or the churches? Mr. Sinclair, I am sure, would be the first to deny it; and to affirm the statement that there is no more suppression and distortion of the truth in the former than in the two latter.

If only to give the devil his due, one should remember that the press at present is not a public but a private enterprise, conducted for profit. True, it is enormously touched with public interest; true, it wields a huge power which justifies the closest public scrutiny of its operations; but it remains a fact that with very few exceptions there are no other newspapers than those created by some capitalist who risks a larger or smaller amount of his money in buying equipment, employing workers, and trying to persuade the public to read the result. If the public won't read, the capitalist loses his investment and the publication halts.

It is clear that this is an extremely faulty system; whether government ownership of the press or government control of a private press would be an improvement is a fascinating by-path down which I cannot digress in this article except to say that as far as recent experience is any guide, such an enterprise in any save the very distant future would be rather less honest and much less efficient than the privately-owned newspapers of today.

The gravest perils of the press certainly have not to do with the publication of matter intended to aid the cause of "the interests." The real dangers are vulgarity, stupidity, shallowness, and that cowardice which follows the foolish mob instead of standing out for the unpopular standards of common sense. These defects in journalism in the United States today are, on the whole, increasing. They explain why it is that metropolitan journalism does not, with the exception of a few papers in a few cities, offer its practitioners either spiritual or financial rewards comparable to those obtained in law, medicine or engineering. These defects are responsible for the people who boast that they read only the headlines; and they perhaps furnish a clue to the large and apparently increasing proportion of graduates of schools of journalism who become press agents, or who follow careers which are unrelated to their professional training.

Much of the blame for this situation must certainly rest with the public which buys newspapers and thereby from day to day permits them to exist. Any experienced editor will tell you that there is a Gresham's law of journalism: that the baser metal in the long run drives out the better. The best edited newspapers in America (best, I mean from the point of view of sobriety, intelligence and impartiality) with a few conspicuous exceptions have today the smallest circulations; there seems every reason to believe that a paper might

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be so well edited that no one would read it or so badly edited that everyone would.

I know that optimists say yellow journalism has passed its zenith; that Mr. Hearst's vulgarities persuade people to read who never read before and are presently graduated to less highly-spiced fare, just as self-playing pianos carry musical illiterates from Pack Up Your Sins And Go To The Devil to the Melody in F and thence to Beethoven. This Pollyanna view seems to me quite unjustified. A few of the crudities of Hearst and Pulitzer in Spanish War days have been eliminated; but fundamentally, yellow journalism is as yellow as it ever was, and a great deal more vulgar. While more copies of decent journals are printed today than two decades ago, the increase of the other sort has been even more rapid. The intelligent, well-written paper which trusts its readers to be more than morons is on the defensive today as it has never been in the past. Not only is the sort of journalism represented by Mr. Hearst spreading because of his rapid acquisition of new papers of his own, but he is being imitated all over the country.

With vulgarization has come standardization. Never before has so small a proportion of the contents of the average daily been produced in the city where it is published; and even of the local news an increasingly large part is identical in competing journals. Though the fiction writers have not yet discovered it, the old-fashioned scoop, or beat, has almost disappeared. Today the aim of every managing editor is to have the same news in his paper that is in every other; and rare is the exclusive story which remains exclusive for more than one edition. In the larger cities, the local reporting staff is supplemented, and increasingly superseded, by a city news association which reports local happenings for simultaneous publication just as the great press associations cover the news of the state, nation and world. Add to these elements the syndicated features, cartoons, signed editorials and special articles, and you have a product which varies from paper to paper, and city to city, as little as do any two of Mr. Armour's well-known hams. (There are, of course, conspicuous and honorable exceptions to this general rule.)

At this moment another serious menace for intelligent journalism in the United States is the tendency toward the tabloid. In New York City the Daily News has succeeded in only about two years in securing the largest morning circulation in the United States, having grown at more rapid pace than any other newspaper, morning or evening, in our history. It is a half size paper consisting largely of photographs and cartoons, printing only a few columns of news and that with the utmost telegraphic brevity. The writing and editing of such a sheet is an entirely legitimate occupation; but it is not journalism in any old sense of the word.

The tabloid size appears to be a failure except in New York and the publishers who have been experimenting with it have now on the whole decided against it. Yet the tendency toward greater and greater condensation in the news columns continues unabated except in a few of the largest cities.

The most fundamental problem of all for honest and intelligent journalism is, of course, the fact that nobody, broadly speaking, really wants the truth—though we all insist that it is our sole desire! The radical wants statements which support a radical point of view; the liberal wants liberalism and the conservative, reaction. It is a universal human failing to close our minds against information which does not fit in with our preconceptions. Your favorite newspaper is your favorite quite as much because of the things it leaves out as those it prints.

In short, the chief frailty of the newspapers is the frailty of human kind. They share the imperfections of a society in which for the first time in history nearly everyone has been taught to read; the greatest experiment in all history, and one which has by no means proved itself as yet. Two hundred years ago the only literate class was that which now reads the New York Times, the Boston Transcript or London Morning Post. The audience corresponding to that now addressed by Mr. Hearst or Lord Riddell did not read at all. When most critics attack the press what they mean is that they wish newspapers to be made for, and read by, persons of superior intelligence: possessing the sort of minds which ought to be, and so often are not, the property of college graduates. The problem goes far deeper than merely furnishing good newspapers. It demands good readers, which is the concern, not of efficient journalism, but efficient democracy.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Maker of Songs

Take strands of speech, faded and broken;
Tear them to pieces, word from word,
Then take the ravelled shreds and dye them
With meanings that were never heard.

Place them across the loom. Let wind-shapes
And sunlight come in at the door,
Or let the radiance of raining
Move in silver on the floor.

And sit you quiet in the shadow
Before the subtly idle strands.
Silence, a cloak, will weigh your shoulder;
Silence, a sorrow, fill your hands.

Yet there shall come the stirring ... Weaver,
Weave well and not with words alone;
Weave through the pattern every fragment
Of glittered breath that you have known.

HAZEL HALL.

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CORRESPONDENCE

When Criticism Comes to the Laboratory

SIR: In his recent paper, A Basis for Criticism, Mr. Conrad Aiken presents the appalling prospect of the world's being further cluttered with elaborate biographical, historical and sociological criticisms in addition to the usual slap-dash estimates.

The critical literature on such artists as Dante and Shakespeare is already so vast and elaborate that any one who attempted to comprehend it all would have prescribed for himself a lifetime undertaking and have left himself very little time for any other reading or study. Fortunately, however, we who are so inclined are at liberty to read Shakespeare and Dante without burdening our minds with the colossal mass of verbiage written about them.

When criticism "goes into the laboratory" are we supposed to ponder interminable twaddle about the artist's physiological, psychological and social condition every time a minor poet goes to press?

There is a brief lyric of Mr. Aiken's beginning "Music I heard with you was more than music," which is beautiful. How do I know that this is a beautiful poem?

Simply because I have read Shelley, Heine, Goethe, D'Annunzio, Olindo Guerrini, Camoes, De Musset, Catullus, Snoilsky, Maragall, Potgieter, Petofi and such and have so developed my knowledge of the beautiful in poetry.

As regards the term "beauty" which Mr. Aiken considers so "singularly shadowy," I am persuaded that the only way in which we can clarify our ideas concerning it is by contemplating, comparing and contrasting those objects that afford us pleasurable and disinterested sensations and by attempting to discover and enjoy those qualities in the great masterpieces of art that have appealed to the aesthetic sense in so many others.

I refuse to believe that any knowledge of Mr. Aiken's personality could add one iota to my appreciation of his poem. He may wear a No. 13 collar or a size 13 shoe and his poem may have been inspired by indigestion or by bootleg booze, for all I mind. He may juggle his peas on a knife or have a suppressed desire for raw onions—what does it matter? Life is too short for me to know or care about such things.

If, however, Mr. Aiken has an interesting personality; if his experience of life has been uncommon; if he has fresh ideas and sets them forth in a pleasing manner, I will gladly read his Book About His Ego when he publishes it; but it will be as a biography and not as an illumination of his poetical endeavors that I shall accept it.

Richmond, Virginia. R. D. LUCAS.

The Limits of Evolution

SIR: You have done your readers a valuable service in publishing Where Evolution Stands Today by Dr. Vernon Kellogg.

May I call the attention of your readers to another illuminating statement on the same problem? Though published in 1901 it is, perhaps, the most clear and scholarly essay on the philosophical aspects of the evolutionary hypothesis ever published, The Limits of Evolution by G. H. Howison (Macmillan). Professor Howison's first paragraph is worth giving in full:

> It has become a commonplace, that in the thinking of the nineteenth century the characteristic and epochal fact is the conception of Evolution. This conception has at length been carried out into every province of human experience even, is now in some loose sense a general habit of thought, and seems on the eve of becoming all-dominant. Its raptest devotees have for some years demanded that the mind of man itself, in which the conception has its very origin and basis, shall confess its own subjection to the universal law, shall henceforth acknowledge itself to be simply a result of development from what is not mind, and shall regard all that it has been accustomed to call its highest attributes—its ideality, its sense of duty, its religion—as tracing their origin back to the unideal, the conscienceless, the unreligious, and as thus in some sense depending for their being on what has well been termed "the physical basis of life."

He next distinguishes carefully between the theories of materialism and agnosticism and points out that extreme advocates of evolution may or may not hold to either of these two explanations or may indeed accept a theory of Cosmic Theism.

The conclusions of his brilliant analysis are as follows:

1) Evolution cannot cross the chasm between the Phenomenal and Noumenal, and does not seriously claim to do so.

2) It cannot cross the break between the Inorganic and the Organic.

3) It cannot explain origins—or, if you will, the genesis of the time-space concepts.

4) It cannot deal successfully with causation. (Dr. Kellogg points this out very clearly.)

5) It cannot explain the human reason. (Karl Pearson also arrives at this conclusion in his Grammar of Science.)

6) It cannot explain man's conscience.

If an association of scientists or group of evolutionists should frankly agree to the above propositions, as no doubt they could, it is my opinion that most of the controversy would disappear. Men like Mr. Bryan fulminate against the theory of evolution not because they object to admitting that there are close structural parallels throughout organic nature nor that the theory of evolution is a convenient short-hand hypothesis to explain the *process* (but not the cause) by which these parallels come about. They object rather because in their lack of knowledge they imagine that the evolutionists are trying to explain everything—Nature, Man, Soul, Mind, God.

It is the fate of a new hypothesis to be injured more by its friends than by its enemies. Careless statements by a new convert, exaggerations by an enthusiast, and the harm is done. The greatest service done the cause of mental testing today is by those conservative and careful scientists who are using the tests, but freely and publicly admit their limitations. Evolution was no exception to the abuse of exaggeration by its so-called friends. Knowing little or no philosophy themselves or expressly dodging philosophical implications (as if one could with impunity!), these so-called scientists nevertheless ran wild all over the field of philosophy. Having little or no religion or keeping their religion carefully protected for Sunday use only, they nevertheless rode roughshod over all the creeds.

Dr. Kellogg's paper is a ray of light but much more is needed if the public is to receive a real knowledge of the place of evolution in science and philosophy.

JOHN M. BREWER.

Harvard University,
Cambridge, Massachusetts.

On Entering the League

SIR: As an advocate of our entrance into the League of Nations I resent Professor Dewey's insinuation that we are governed by altruistic motives.

That the nations, including the United States, are actuated by conflicting selfish interests is in our opinion an argument for instead of against the League. If there were no conflicting interests there would be little need of a League.

Nor does Professor Dewey's distinction between a league of governments and a league of nations impress me. I see insuperable physical difficulties that will prevent a meeting of the nations of the earth under a tree to settle their differences. They must send representatives. It is desirable that the League representatives of a nation shall be in harmony with that nation's government, otherwise there will be a deadlock.

What we aim at is a settlement of international questions by general agreement instead of by special agreements between the nations two at a time. The latter method only leads to further conflict. The alleged weakness of the League does not dismay us. An engine is useless until the power is turned on. So will the League be weak unless it is backed by public opinion.

Many good people opposed the ratification of the United States Constitution because it was conservative. It was, indeed! It recognized chattel slavery. But the Union was formed and it later supplied the power to abolish slavery. Perhaps the League will grow as the Constitution has grown.

San Francisco, California. A. B. MAVITY.

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The Negro Players

The Chip Woman's Fortune, by Thornton Butterfield; Salome, by Oscar Wilde; May 7th. The Comedy of Errors, by William Shakespeare, May 14th. Given by the Ethiopian Art Theatre at the Frazee Theatre.

IF only because there has been so much misunderstanding and slighting of the Negro in this country, it should be said that the Ethiopian Art Theatre, even before it arrived in New York, had an audience which was prepared to be as generous as it knew how. There is a small but enthusiastic group of people bound together by a desire to have the Negro accomplish, in writing, in art, in literature, something extraordinarily good, a group who would be only too pleased to have the Negro beat us at as many of our own games as possible. They went to the Ethiopian Art Theatre with difficulty keeping back a hope that here was the real thing at last. Unfortunately it turned out to be a long way from the real thing.

The Ethiopian Art Theatre. A name that suggests velvet black skins and cotton and dialect and deep free-rolling laughter and a happy cousinship with nature which we poor pinched victims of civilization can well envy. But in at least four ways the Ethiopian Art Theatre is far from being Ethiopian. It is directed by a white man, Mr. Raymond O'Neil; it offered plays by white men (Wilde, Shakespeare); its members are far from being what Granny Maumee called Royal Black; and they had behind them not the South which is the Negro's true background, but the dancing and vaudeville background of Chicago.

The little one-act play called The Chip Woman's Fortune which began both bills, though supposedly about Negro life, with the exception of a few lines here and there might just as well have been about white people. I saw it three times, and each time it was a little paler than the time before. It might be described as a mild, sincere comedy of gratitude, surprise, reconciliation, speeding up suddenly at the end into jazz as the phonograph is turned on and all the members of the family dance about the room with that amazingly accurate syncopated motion which seems natural to Negroes but not to us. The acting, like the play, was sincere, usually natural, but not very positive, and left little impression beyond the regret that Mr. Sidney Kirkpatrick's motions were not as true and well-managed as his voice, and another regret that Miss Evelyn Preer, who did with her voice just what she chose to, should have chosen to overact with it.

Salome followed the Chip Woman's Fortune, and a greater contrast could not be imagined. Insincerity is a feeble word to describe one of the world's worst plays by one of the world's most overrated writers. Salome is like a large purple bathtub lying all alone in a hayfield. It is the most lurid, most uneatable and most poisonous-colored fruit on the tree of synthetic sin. Only a gold-plated spittoon falling down all the stairways of a deserted house could give an equal effect of brass and emptiness.

Yet the Ethiopian company, by a great deal of hard work, managed to blow a certain amount of its own kind of life into this gilded carcass. At moments the play actually rose from the ground and lived; at moments the audience was under the spell of something like the heavy exotic excitement which Oscar Wilde intended. But a minute later the whole play would crash to the ground under the sheer weight of its own verbiage. Mr. Kirkpatrick valiantly tottered about, an Atlas under the weight of Herod Tiffany's descriptions of his treasures and jewels. At least Mr. Kirkpatrick achieved uniformity, a certain style, a certain key. But Miss Laura Bowman, who did a conscientious and at times touching portrait of the old Chip Woman, underlined all the dull and heavy emphasis of the thankless part of Herodias. And most of the lesser roles pointed out the purple Pullman plush qualities of Salome rather than avoided them.

Probably most plays should be seen more than once if one really wants to know how well done they are. I was both glad and sorry to see Salome twice. On the opening night Miss Evelyn Preer (who scarcely looks as if she had Negro blood), though she staggered as did all the other actors under twenty tons of poetic Oscar, unlike the others seemed to enjoy the attempt, and on the whole she won through the lines to a stirring independence of them. Her performance was very uneven. She used the same intonations persistently, but in four or five places concentrated a depth and pitch of emotion almost uncanny, so much more poignant was it than even some of the very best the stage gives us. But these were small fragments, jewels in a not at all planned setting. There was nothing beautiful about her Salome, no soft eastern allure, but rather crouching, dangerous motions, menace, purpose, intensity. Her dance before Herod for the reward which is to be the head of John was decidedly unbeautiful, unplanned, uncontinuous, yet, in spite of these lacks, curiously exciting.

But three nights later the hydrogen had all gone out of the balloon, and it was bumping along the ground. The rare and priceless jewels in Miss Preer's Salome were extinguished, nothing was left but yards of passionate smouldering rhetoric, and the Wilde Pegasus ridden heavily with the spurs of effort. Seeing Salome twice in one week is almost unbearable. I'd sooner sit down to a meal of black diamonds with cream poured over them . . . .

Paste diamonds, sour cream.

In the second bill a laborious attempt was made to "jazz" the Comedy of Errors. The jazz did not enter into the play itself, but poured from the wings while three actors dressed as clowns, driven by the whip of a fourth dressed in a silk hat and a black coat, changed the scenes. This attempt at speed and gayety resulted only in hurry, and in an acute sense that all the actors were uncomfortable or unhappy. I have said that Salome was hard to bear. The Comedy of Errors was impossible to bear.

Surely it is absurd and unfair to force an injection of jazz into Shakespeare just because the actors are Negroes. Such an artificial bait for public interest panders to that ignorance in the public which can think of nothing besides jazz which the Negroes have given us. The Negroes have a lot to give us. They have nothing to give us if they try to copy us. When their dramatic teachers and directors force them to copy us, they seem to be obeying nothing beyond a desire to answer the question, Is the Negro inferior to the white man, in the negative. The point is that the Negro is neither superior nor inferior, but different. When he tries to copy us, his art will seem inferior. When he is himself, it will seem superior to ours. The Ethiopian Art Theatre was almost entirely derivative. We must look for the real thing in other directions, and wait for the time when Negroes will build a theatre based not on envy or imitation of things written by white men which even white men cannot play very well, but upon a bitter scorn of what we can do, and a bitter pride in what they have within themselves.

ROBERT LITTELL.

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Books and Things

TOWARDS the end of the nineteenth century Hippolyte Parigot took up a convenient distinction and wrote a so-so book with it, Génie et Métier. Like other useful distinctions, this that he adopted is no doubt one illustration more of man's besetting proclivity to use words for the sake of making things clearer than things are. No doubt there are great writers whose genius and technique are not separable except now and then, others whose technique is genius plus padding; others again whose genius, if you chase it into a corner, looks at last like nothing but technique. Of course there is a dim borderland, etc. But approximately, but near enough to truth for a learner's practice, the distinction is between the rainbow's end and the machine you can take to pieces.

With one eye on the inimitable part of Marcel Proust, his mysterious native endowment, and with the other on his technique, from which all may learn who can—so, I take it for granted, have younger novelists in every country been reading A la Recherche du Temps Perdu, Proust's voluminous novel, some of it not yet published. Since last autumn it has probably had more of these vigilant readers than ever, for Proust's death in November, at the age of fifty-one, has naturally made his name more widely known. Their number has been further increased, in England and America, by the appearance, at about the time when he died, of an incredibly dexterous translation, faithful alike to his beauties and his difficulties, of his first two volumes, Swann's Way, by Mr. E. K. Scott Moncrieff. In this country it is the Messrs. Holt who publish this translation, at five dollars for the two volumes, and I can't at this moment think where a young writer, eager to learn and capable of learning, will get more for his money.

From Swann's Way I like to imagine Miss Rebecca West as learning that a sleepless night need not condemn a heroine to recollection of events so exactly in their chronological order that they read like a lucid narrative lecture to a mixed audience. Seldom, assuredly, is insomnia the parent of such tours de force. I like to imagine Swann's Way teaching Miss Dorothy Richardson how to weave into her texture of sensations and perceptions, without spoiling its color-scheme, those few explanatory words here and there the lack of which teases me. I should like if I could to imagine Mr. James Joyce admitting, while he read Proust, that although one may attend to everything part of the time, and to something all of the time, one can't attend, etc., etc. But Mr. Joyce is not very young.

Older writers also, both those who had died or taken their ply before he began to write, and those who were long dead when he was born, might have studied Marcel Proust somewhat gainfully. De Quincey is a good example, because he and Proust both deal in very early memories. The death of his sister Elizabeth, when she was eight and he six, left a deep impression on de Quincey. So did her funeral. "To take my own case, when I heard," he says in Suspiria de Profundis, "those dreadful words of St. Paul applied to my sister, viz., that she should be raised a spiritual body—nobody can suppose that selfishness, or any other feeling than that of agonizing love, caused the rebellion of my heart against them. I knew already that she was to come again in beauty and power. I did not now learn this for the first time. And that thought, doubtless, made my sorrow sublimer; but also it made it deeper. For here lay the sting of it, viz., in the fatal words—'We shall all be *changed*.' How was the unity of my interest in her to be preserved, if she were to be altered, and no longer to reflect in her sweet countenance the traces that were sculptured on my heart?" Unity of interest, at six years old?

De Quincey, it is true, was quite alive to this peculiarity in his method of fetching things from his childhood and then setting his adult self to work them out. "*I* decipher what the child only felt in cipher," he says a few pages later. "I, for instance, did not as a child *consciously* read in my own deep feelings these ideas. No, not at all; nor was it possible for a child to do so. I, the child, had the feelings, I, the man, decipher them." But in Proust the contribution made by the deciphering or translating adult to an early memory is less obtrusive. He leaves the image, which is oftenest a visual image, intact. The very worldly wisdom which plays over his childhood is careful not to alloy the gold of sights and sounds. The long day turns young again while we read. Under the high sun we keep finding, with a surprise always renewed, pool after pool of daybreak. Memory, the mother of so many of Proust's Muses, visited parts of his past, and seems to have had, as Saint Ambrose thought the Virgin Mary had, the gift of bestowing virginity on those whom she visited.

The earlier portions of Swann's Way, Ouverture and Combray, made me think of Walter Pater, so much so that I reread The Child in the House, and was put out by the discovery that it read like a book. It sounded orisonned and acolyted, julianned and cyrilled. For all its beauty, because of all its beauty, this prose suggested the passing, along an aisle hushed by light falling through richly stained windows, stained too demurely, of a fair white hearse. Out of such depurated pages, life though they have and of more than one kind, it is youth which has died. Here the experiencing boy seems to have shaken his perceptions through a sieve before having them. Proust was a sensitive, a terribly delicate boy, but compared to Pater's his sensitiveness appears unsteered, catholic, omnivorous, confident of finding interest and beauty everywhere in an unsifted world.

Proust has been likened to Henry James—I don't know why—to the Henry James of the later and greater novels, in which James groups his minor characters, those restless probers and apperceivers, round the central situation he and they and we are scrutinizing. He lends them his and our curiosity, and without lessening his. He seems now and then to be encouraging them to hope that they can make out the figure in his carpet by counting the stitches. Proust's curiosity, equally sensitive, is more dirigible, more sweeping and lonelier. Now and then he shares it for awhile with somebody who teaches him a new kind of curiosity, with Bergotte for example, or with the painter Elstir. But Elstir is only slightly aware of this sharing, Bergotte not at all aware. Proust's hero turns his attention upon music, landscape, manners, upon shades of behavior that would have been too fine for the three Miss Poles, upon architecture, painting, servants, duchesses, love. Never does he seem author-bent, author-bowed, over a piece of task-work he would sometimes have escaped from if his author had let him alone.

At first, however, we don't attend to Proust's craft, so much else is there to think about, so much to see, in this limitless novel, the first ever written by a Renoir-about-town with the gift of wisdom.

P. L.

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The American Rhythm

The American Rhythm, by Mary Austin. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $1.60.

MANY people, I believe, vaguely associate Mrs. Mary Austin with the notion of connecting art and literature in America with the culture of the Amerindian; and they have an a priori objection to the belief that a sophisticated culture can tie up with a primitive one, or that it can find common roots with a primitive culture when it is planted in the same geographic environment. This settled indifference to our squandered birthright makes it likely that Mrs. Austin's latest work will not get the attention that it deserves; all the more, perhaps, because Mrs. Austin has an original mind in which authentic intuitions, drawn from the wells of experience, have the misfortune to be poured into cracked and ugly academic bottles; and her art often sounds like that "braying of maimed voices, hybrids of art and sociology" of which she herself complains in one of her poems. Even Mrs. Austin's errors, however, have a certain fertility and vigor that a great many truths lack; and if every particular point in her thesis should turn out to be wrong, her work would still be an interesting contribution to criticism.

The essay on The American Rhythm is, superficially, an attempt to show that American poetry, if it arises out of genuine experience, will have a rhythm that is native to the landscape and the primitive occupations of the American scene—the free loping stride of the pioneer, the swing of the axe, and the empathy towards "free flung mountain ridges, untrimmed forests, evidence of structure and growth." Mrs. Austin observes that "in so far as verse forms are shaped by topography and the rhythm of food supply, the aboriginal American was singing in precisely the forms that were later to become native to the region of Spoon River, the Land of Little Rain, and the country of the Cornhuskers."

As long ago as 1904-05 Mrs. Austin predicted that "American poetry must inevitably take, at some period of its history, the mold of Amerind verse," and so, in a sense, she may well claim that she anticipated the arrival of Masters, Sandburg and Vachel Lindsay. As a demonstration of American verse-forms Mrs. Austin devotes the second half of the American Rhythm to her very poignant and beautiful "re-expressions" of Amerindian poems, and these verses are sufficiently different in content and achievement to assure one that there is more of the Indian than of Mrs. Austin in them.

Beneath the thesis that American poetry must be shaped by American experience is the much more important notion that all poetry is shaped and measured by primitive, organic experiences. "Rhythm," says Mrs. Austin, "in so far as it affects our poetic mode, has nothing to do with our intellectual life." The fundamental rhythms are given in the very nature of the human organism itself, the rise and fall of the breath, the iambic lub-*dub* of the heart. "Within the organism many minor organs have each their distinctive rhythmic tempo, both nervous and functional.". . and "thus we represent, each one of us, an orchestration of rhythms which, subjectively co-ordinated, produce the condition known as well-being." "Given a suitable arrangement of the stimuli, as in orchestrated music or poetic drama properly recited, or the consciousness of reciprocated passion, and the whole energetic plane of the organism is raised." So far it is plain sailing. Every pacifist knows, I suppose, how easily his intellectual objections to war are mowed down by the throb of men marching to the blare of the cornet and the thump of the drum; and one knows, too, how Mr. Zero is transformed into Bacchus, with "vine-leaves in his hair," when a triumph in love gives him momentarily the sense of mastery over his pallid environment.

Now one step further. If organic rhythms are at the bottom of all poetry, they are there simply because they are at the bottom of all experience: the heart goes lub-dub in the Chinaman as well as in the Chinook. So on top of these basic rhythms are those that derive from one's daily motions and occupations—the mother lulls her child to sleep with Rock-a-bye baby; the sailor in the old days would haul ropes to the measure of Give me some time to blow the man down, and the recruit in the army marches a little more jauntily as he chants, perhaps only to himself, I-'ad-a-g'-job and I LEFT-right. The blacksmiths in the old German villages used to hammer out the red iron, I am told, to the rhythm of Komm' nur Sonntag, with the blow of the hammer falling on the Komm' and the tattoo on the anvil following lightly; and a score of other examples could be added, in which the rhythm of work has actually expressed itself, either crudely or elaborately, in verse. If we agree that these primitive occupations have left obvious and distinctive rhythms we may infer—even if we reject Mrs. Austin's too-confident associations—that other experiences have also left their imprint upon speech and upon poetry.

The element of action and personal participation is never quite absent, it would seem, from primitive verse; for if the capacity for work is heightened by being rhythmically attuned to the task, so also is the capacity for rhythmic harmony heightened by doing work—that is, by using one's voice, by beating time, by dancing, by gesture. In the end, as Miss Jane Harrison has shown us in Art and Ritual, the arts isolate themselves from the work in hand, and the actor and the spectator are divorced, so that today we usually mean (alas!) by "work," drudgery without relief, as we mean by "art" play without responsibility. Before this breach has become complete, men discover the vitalizing effect of rhythm in movement and speech, and they learn to take the cluttered, dissolute fragments of experience back into the body so that they may arise again, out of the unconscious, as dance and poetry. Mrs. Austin says: "Man learned to dance when he felt helpless or fragmentary, when he felt dislocated in his universe. As he learned to know such states of psychic completion for states of power, he danced for the sake of the meal or the mate. Who can doubt that the Allness is moved by our singing, since it immediately begins to throb in us as the dance progresses? Will not the corn fill out in the ear, even as the soul fills?" In other words, at their deepest, poetry and drama and dance give one that feeling of fulfillment and kinship which the sexual embrace gives: they energize the organism and deliver it from the sense of frustration which the blind hazards of experience might otherwise leave it with.

In her interest in the communal environment of poetry, in her appreciation of literature, music and the dance as essential to the well-being of men, in her feeling that poetry is as necessary as bread rather than as trivial as push-pins, Mrs. Austin's work is as important as it is vigorous and wise—and it is very vigorous and wise. With her aid we can, I think, see a little more clearly why the urbane Addisons and Popes of the eighteenth century left

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English poetry in an impasse of epigram from which Burns and Wordsworth rescued it in a romantic "return to Nature" by way of the peasant's ballads, and this is but one path of reflection among a dozen, Mrs. Austin points to. What, then, are Mrs. Austin's weaknesses?

The first weakness is that it is easier to accept Mrs. Austin's general thesis than it is to follow her particular illustrations. An opponent, for example, would single out the fact that on one page the iambic lub-dub is attributed to the heart, and on another to the heavy Nordic walk; and when Mrs. Austin finds the rhythm of the woodland stride and the swinging ax in Lincoln's Gettysburg speech it seems to me, frankly, that she is letting her imagination run away with her. These fallacies of illustration arise, however, out of a second weakness; namely, that Mrs. Austin is interested in an Americanization program, and she is anxious to make clear, not the influence of rustic occupations and experiences upon poetry, but the influence of *American* occupations upon *American* poetry. In order to make out a better case for Americanism Mrs. Austin is compelled to deny, or at least to belittle, the universal significance of poetry derived from other environments and other cultures. Instead of showing the influence of a rustic background upon cultivated poetry, as one might so easily do with the great bards of England, Mrs. Austin casts the greater part of English poetry aside as "the instrument of a selected class, the rhythms of privilege," in much the same fashion that, apparently, the Proletkult despises the art and literature of the "bourgeois" world.

Let us grant that cultivated people have been late in doing justice to the natural environment and to the culture of the folk: is not Mrs. Austin a little hasty in abandoning the acknowledged treasures of a more sophisticated state? If the great body of art and literature inevitably springs out of the soil, it comes to flower in the city: had Giotto not gone to Florence and Shakespeare not gone to London would the Italian have painted more than a wayside shrine, or would the Warwickshire lad have done more than give a ballad to the alehouse? Without doubt we have lost, we city folk, the ability to sympathize very vividly with the fertilization rites of Dionysos, and unless we could follow the wild women in the hills of Attica the whole ritual of Dionysos would seem pale and "theatrical" to us; yet without appreciating the underlying rhythm of these ceremonies we can respond to The Bacchae, even at third-hand in translation:

> But whoe'er can know as the long days go
> That To Live is happy has found his heaven.

While the organic imprint of the original environment is lacking in us, we have a cerebral sensitiveness, a receptivity, a capacity for responding to the whole heritage of culture, which are not to be despised; and to talk about the great word-hoard which the poets of the world, like Widsith, have unlocked for us as the product of a privileged class is to damn gold by saying that it has a yellow streak. Moreover, literature itself is as much a part of our experience as the raw environment of field and mountain: the rhythms that have been fixed in literature come to us as a natural heritage, proper to us as men who inherit our own creations as well as nature's. To cast aside culture is as great a folly as to cast aside nature; for in man they become one.

Finally, the thesis which Mrs. Austin puts to the front, that there is a distinct American rhythm akin to that expressed by the Indian, seems to me both distracting and unimportant For in the nature of things, it either exists in the American poet or it does not: if it does exist it will take hold of him, as Whitman's vers libre finally conquered all his Sunday School verse; and if it does not, then the "American rhythm" will be as artificial as an Italian sonnet. It is one thing to go back to the soil in Rhode Island, with old, cultivated farms and a steady round of life and a landscape that at times recalls Kent or Sussex; and it is another to go back to it in the midst of the corn-carpeted prairie. If Mrs. Austin's essential theory is worth anything, a quite different rhythm will arise in poetry and music out of these two different backgrounds; and to call both of these American, or to attempt to identify them with the art of the aborigine, is to relate them to a political unit and to a past which, from the standpoint of our present culture, can scarcely be said to exist.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Degeneration in the Great French Masters

Degeneration in the Great French Masters, by Jean Carrère, translated by Joseph McCabe. New York: Brentano's. $4.00.

AT first glance this volume would seem to be a by-blow of Max Nordau's with the Muse of Puritanism. Yet this is not exactly the case. The title Degeneration is a misleading and inadequate translation of Les Mauvais Maîtres. M. Carrère belonged to that numerous body of critics (Lasserre, Seillière, etc.) who believed that few good things can come out of the Age of Romanticism. Like Professor Babbitt, he considers Rousseau as the fountain-head of all disaster, and like Léon Daudet, he stands for a reactionary onslaught on the nineteenth century. The present volume, a collection of articles which originally appeared in the Revue Hebdomadaire, 1902-1904, is slightly tinged with clericalism. But on the whole M. Carrère's attack rests on a broader and a more original basis; again, he differs from other destructive critics in fully recognizing the literary ability of the writers whom he censures: these men may be mauvais, but they are admittedly maîtres.

As regards the broad basis, our author wishes all other authors to represent a "solar ideal" of moral energy. Strength, virility, serenity; heroism, joy and goodness; these are the qualities which he insistently urges. The essay on George Sand contains the meat of his doctrine:

> She is tremendously dark and unhealthy, for the spirit of which she is so powerful a synthesis is in itself fatally evil. It is... the *female spirit* as opposed to the *male spirit*. Just as Goethe, Rabelais and Plato were... three of the most complete manifestations of the solar, bracing, creative man, so George Sand is the most superb incarnation of the *female woman*, the woman from whom issue shade, disturbance and desolation.

One is tempted to cry, Ecclesia! Yet Carrère's ideal goes deeper than that; it is at times a Dionysiac ideal, with echoes of Nietzsche. Together with other idéo-réalistes, he sings the hymn of "life sonorous and luminous," he praises the strong joy of Rabelais and Homer, the bracing power of Dante and Shakespeare. Opposed to these the petty love-affair of Sand and Musset would dimly seem "as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine." Anti-feminist, classicist and ethical teacher, M. Carrère is finally driven into exalting the work of Mistral and of

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Jean Moréas (!) as the chief modern examples of a high serenity.

Few there are who would challenge this lofty ideal, which is neither narrowly ethical nor provincial in its purview. We simply wonder whether every writer can or should be a Cornelian hero. A standard which virtually makes a tabula rasa of the nineteenth century in France is perhaps open to question. We need not reçapitulate in full an indictment by now grown very stale. Briefly, Rousseau, an egomaniac in his moments of weakness, is thereby judged the father of "unhealthy individualism." Most nineteenth-century writers tread in his trail, with the following differentiations. Chauteaubriand perverts and tyrannizes over the reader through his addiction to melancholy and the "malady" of love. Lamartine and Hugo were "healed" of their weakness, but Stendhal was simply wicked, and Balzac has corrupted society in the direction of materialism. Baudelaire, the stages of whose soul-life are well analyzed, was primarily haunted by the fear of living. Flaubert, the Norman viking, is anti-social and nihilistic. Zola, otherwise admirable, is led astray by his mediocre intelligence; and Verlaine carries poetic individualism to the point of "absolute *decay*."

Several of these judgments are correct from the standpoint of moral character; and the present reviewer, agreeing with M. Carrère that moral energy is one of the finest forces in life or literature, has no desire to figure as an advocatus diaboli. Let us leave that rôle to M. Carrère himself, for the unique feature of this volume is that the writer preludes and accompanies each attack by a *defence* of each author from the artistic point of view. "Bad" as they are, Balzac, Chateaubriand and the rest remain consummate "masters"—for whom Jean Carrère avows a peculiar preference! Rousseau's eloquent passion and his sincerity rank him as a "great writer and a great man." Chateaubriand, through his grandeur of soul and brain, is the "prince of French prose." Balzac had a high creative ideal and his constructive "genius was a miracle." Even Stendhal is acknowledged to possess psychological depth, while "it is impossible not to love Flaubert" for his native nobility. Musset, Baudelaire and Verlaine all have a great charm, especially effective on M. Carrère. The latter even gives the whole case for the defence in admitting that Balzac made a wonderful portrayal of his world, and that Verlaine had "all the gifts of a true poet." If there are discrepancies between such dictums and those previously cited, the fault is not ours.

To all this power of literary appreciation, M. Carrère joins a power of vision exemplified in the chapter on George Sand and in the comparison of Flaubert with the roving Normans. His own style is excellent, though hampered here by the translator's occasional awkwardness in prose and by a feeble method of rendering the French Alexandrine. On the whole, we cannot accuse the author of missing the point—he knows what makes a literary masterpiece. But his "solar" system is composed of concentric and orderly circles, in the midst of which resides his fixed idea. We believe rather that the various fields of human effort are intersecting circles—pictorial art may link with religion, imaginative poetry may or may not coincide with ethical or socio-historical segments. There is room for all in the diversity of creative endeavor. While it may be better for great writers to shine as central and radiating suns, no critical Copernicus can exclude erratic and brilliant comets. In other terms, the age of literary absolutism has passed.

E. P. Dargan.

From Benavente and Martínez Sierra

Plays, by Jacinto Benavente: Third Series, translated by John Garrett Underhill. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

Plays of G. Martínez Sierra, translated by John Garrett Underhill, Helen Granville-Barker and Harley Granville-Barker. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. $3.50.

WE have substitutes no doubt, but the Spanish precision, speed, high color and variety of lyricism plainly is impossible to get in English; we know that already and Mr. Underhill's rather inflexible and elaborate translation of Benavente makes the fact all the more evident. But even with what is left for us, these plays, Saturday Night especially, come over vividly enough. What brings them over the hurdles of language and Mr. Underhill is the same thing that from the beginning has brought the ideas and subtleties of Benavente's work across the footlights: the safe and bright progress of the mere outer play itself. Saturday Night cut loose from its psychologies and symbolisms and delicate implications is a glittering play for the theatre.

A group of people on the Riviera are talking, among them the Prince, heir to the throne of his uncle the King of Suabia, and Michael, the King's brother and with them the mother of the prince. There are among others, the profligate English poet and Michael's mistress, Imperia, the central figure of the play. News comes that a son has been born to the king. The Prince is delighted to be relieved of his august future, and he and the poet plan to visit one of the town dives, in order to meet Donina, a member of the circus troupe and daughter to Imperia. In the dive Donina, betrayed by her lover to the Prince, stabs the Prince, who is carried past the police to Imperia's house. News comes of the death of the new heir and the abdication of the King. Michael departs to assume the crown. Imperia takes Donina away with her, paying the lover to pretend devotion. Michael returns for Imperia. Donina discovers her lover's deception and dies. Imperia departs to become the power behind the Suabian throne.

Set out like that the story of this play seems the rankest melodrama, but the details of the structure as Benavente contrives it and the sharp pattern he gives to each character lift the whole into regions of fantastic but strangely biting romance. To this fantastic and brilliantly wrought piece Benavente adds his meanings. These meanings are added, are distilled and shed upon, are interwoven with, are beckoned from, the framework of incidents that make the play. On each act Benavente establishes a distinct mood. It is moods, meanings, the implications of life and truth and innocence and spiritual power that serve most to mark the play as Benavente's. And in so far as these meanings and ideas and subtle significances are woven into the entire form of the play, the structure, the story, and are inseparable from all, they give the play a novelty and a special kind of tense cerebral urgency that I have seen nowhere outside of Benavente. But sometimes they appear to be merely talked into the play and never to have been forced into an inseparable creation of the whole made one, into a lucid unity. In the translation we fare worse, the effect becomes a sermon often, and the exaltation becomes a bore. And to my mind in Saturday Night there is sometimes, in the last part especially, a gap between all the

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things that the author would like to put into it and the play that he has actually set alive. And there is too much mention of words like truth, life, youth and dreams, all of which might well move on from abstract terms to sharp creation. In the Spanish, I know, the glow of the diction, rhythm and imagery carry everything further toward a complete persuasion. But Saturday Night remains, for all that, a drama not always certain in its success. It is full of rattling good theatrical moments, with an inexhaustible release in them of life, commotion, wide vitality, and yet with a certain foreignness of thinking and statement and now and again of what must seem to us animated platitude.

In Martínez Sierra, Benavente's disciple, the same facility and inventive abundance are everywhere. These plays of Martínez Sierra's have from the start the artistic body that explains them. Take the best of the nine plays, The Kingdom of God and The Cradle Song. In The Cradle Song a foundling is brought to the convent, the sisters—of all types they are—decide to keep the child with them. The girl has grown up, she is a good girl but not called to the sisterhood, and her betrothed comes to take her away. The sisters are left without her. Two acts. In The Kingdom of God Sister Gracia of the order of St Vincent—where the pledge is taken yearly and binding only to that extent—has left a fashionable life and is nursing in an old men's home. Her family come to see her, but she keeps to her vocation. In the second act she is twenty-nine and works now in a maternity asylum for women who have got into trouble, life beginning here in bitterness and shame as before among the old men it ended in comical pathos and lonely, pitiful absurdity. A doctor begs her to marry him, Sister Gracia resists the temptation to leave her work, and has herself transferred to another mission. In the last act she is a woman of seventy and the Reverend Mother of an orphanage. One of the orphans returns as a successful bullfighter, bringing Sister Gracia the trophy of the bull's ear. There is a mutiny among the boys over the bad food, which is bad because of the dishonesty of the town board. And the play ends with Sister Gracia and Felipe, the leader of the riot; the boy puts his head down on his arms and bursts into tears, and Sister Gracia puts her hand on his shoulder. "Don't cry," she says, "men don't cry, you know. And they don't complain. They suffer but they work and hope."

In English or in French I have never seen anywhere a realism like this of Sierra's, so warm and so unprofessional but full. Through these plays crowds character after character, done abundantly and briefly, people forced into some typicality or clear line that, no matter how long or how little they are on the stage, can sum up and reveal their lives and dreams. An old man, a village wife, a provincial doctor, a country priest, each one of them is made so much the type that it can be played as an individual, and so fully indicated that it implies the type. Each part stands the test, too often neglected in modern drama, of actability; each part is ready for and demands the actor through being clearly drawn but never overmodelled. And yet there is nothing in the author's treatment of either characters or situation that is self-conscious. Toward whatever he portrays there is never in Sierra anything of that sort of ill-bred exploitation that we find so often in serious modern drama, but only a sharp-eyed and elastic humanity.

And finally Sierra's work, like Benavente's often, is filled with a thing that, unless you know at first hand something of a country like Spain, is not easy to get straight, and to understand as it relates to the entire conception of the plays. I mean a kind of natural piety. In English drama, except in those poetic plays where the imagination lifts the whole into what is true by a certain direct radiance, all religious and even gentle sentiments outside of love and romance, tend toward a stale pietude or awkward self-consciousness or else merely implied solemn feeling. But in these plays of Sierra's there is often a gentle goodness said simply and made a part of the character; there is a kind of harmonious fatalism; there is a piety that is without cant, and even an orthodoxy that extends beyond its particular creed into universal meaning. These people he portrays appear to have cooperated with the natural world, and to have found in this world about them images of their desires and hopes, and gracious, final symbols of their thoughts. Gentle or violent as it may be, life in them takes on a harmony like nature's, and there is a gravity and dignity about their reflections and aspirations that is too close and spontaneous to be cant and too simply felt to be mere platitude.

STARK YOUNG.

First Editions at a Dollar

Books in Black or Red, by Edmund Lester Pearson. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

MR. Pearson writes a book on book-collecting "for the poor birds who cannot buy rarities at hundreds of dollars apiece, but like to acquire books at seventy-five cents or a dollar or three." If you like rummaging the second-hand shops for literary curiosities here is one way of doing it without rising from your arm-chair. Mr. Pearson puts a bundle of them on your table. You will find, for instance, treasures from Mr. Beadle's original Dime Library, vintage of 1884, bearing such delightful titles as Texas Chick, the Southwest Detective; or, Tiger Lily, the Vulture Queen. Illustrations which Mr. Pearson reproduces show those old-time heroines who pass through fearful dangers without rumpling long skirts trailing on the ground—hunt jaguars without exposing one mid-Victorian inch of ankle—confront villains in top-hats and whiskers black, ambrosial. "Hold, Captain Forrester! Surrender or you die!" "God above! You have risen from the deep, Mabel Mortimer!"

You will find, too, books more educational—suggesting ways to make oneself popular in any gathering: "by locking firmly together two bashful persons (bachelor and spinster preferred) with a gutta-percha 'finger-trap'; by presenting some dignified gentleman with a 'trick cigar,' which would 'explode with a red light, killing the smoker and amusing the spectators'; by distributing whistles, recommended as 'sending the girls into fits and driving the old folks crazy.'"

Books, again, setting forth the pleasures of "Presbyterian Evening Entertainments." Books sketching the requirements of the perfect letter. "From a Lady Confessing a Change of Feelings." "To an Entire Stranger Seen at Church." Even—surely the most delicate of all epistles for a young man to write—the model of a letter "To a Lady Complaining of Coldness."

There are dictionaries, too, in Mr. Pearson's bundle. One of them, Americanisms—Old and New (1889), is a marvelous little British handbook which defines a "jag" as an "umbrella"—on the basis of this quotation from the Albany Journal:

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He came in very late (after an unsuccessful effort to unlock the front door with his umbrella) through an unfastened coal-hole in the sidewalk. Coming to himself toward daylight, he found himself—spring overcoat, silk hat, jag and all—stretched out in the bath-tub.

It is an interesting packet of odds and ends which Mr. Pearson brings together. I like especially the story of the man who saw a truly extraordinary spectacle—a battle between an octopus and a whale, far out at sea, in the middle of a moonlit night. He ran below to tell the captain so that he could share the scene. And was rewarded, by the captain, with a boot thrown at his head.

Tales of moonlit nights and whales, of dictionaries and Dime Novels, Mr. Pearson weaves through twelve good-humored papers. His mood is genial but his own wit heavy. It is the Golden Treasury of Nonsense that makes the book amusing. M.

John Erskine's Poems

Collected Poems; 1907-1922, by John Erskine. New York: Duffield & Company. $1.50.

THE principal problem raised by several thousand other books and the Collected Poems of Professor Erskine has been quite brilliantly discussed by Mr. T. S. Eliot in the chapter of The Sacred Wood entitled Tradition and the Individual Talent. That chapter really leads to the conclusion that the poetry which merely conforms, which follows "the ways of the immediate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its successes," is flagrantly untraditional. It lacks that historical sense, which "is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together," and which "makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his contemporaneity." This untraditional poetry does not embody the paradox which respect for literature as an art with traditions produces: it does not alter the past while being directed by the past. Professor Erskine is a serious and competent manufacturer of repetitions, but "novelty is better than repetition." Because he does not achieve an equation between novelty and a consciousness of the past, as William Vaughn Moody did and as Wallace Stevens is now doing, his work cannot possibly fit into literature. G. B. M.

The Index for Volume XXXIV, which was completed with our issue No. 442, has been printed separately. It will be mailed on request, post free, to any subscriber who will send his name and address on a post card directed to the New Republic, 421 West 21st Street, New York City.

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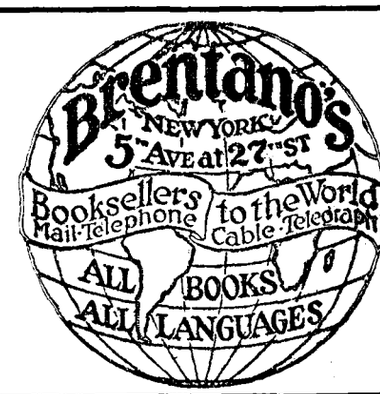

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